



# REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

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## Throw Open the Gates of Europe to Refugees!

- \* Greece after the Betrayal of SYRIZA
- \* Britain: Corbyn New Leader of Labour
- \* Palestine in Revolt

- \* US-Iran Nuclear Agreement
- \* Mass Protests in Brazil
- \* 75 Years after the Murder of Trotsky

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# English-Language Journal of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), No. 41, October 2015

Throw Open the Gates of Europe to Refugees!	p.3
Israel, Syria and the International Refugees Crisis	p.6
Greek Elections Result in Victory for the Reformist SYRIZA	p.9
Greek Elections: Critical Support for LAE (Popular Unity)!	p.11
Greece: SYRIZA Splits after Tsipras Capitulates to the EU	p.12
SYRIZA betrays Greece's Workers and Poor!	p.14
Socialists Discuss Perspectives of Class Struggle in Greece	p.16
Britain: Corbyn Victorious in Labour Leadership Election	p.17
UK Labour Party: Critical Support for Jeremy Corbyn!	p.18
RCIT Austria to Run in Vienna's Municipal Elections	p.21
Palestine: Occupied East Jerusalem in Revolt	p.22
Israel and the Arms Trade	p.26
US-Iran Nuclear Agreement Signed	p.28
Turkey: Stop the Aggression against the Kurds!	p.31
Brazil: All workers and oppressed to the streets on 20 August!	p.33
Platform of the CCR (Section of the RCIT in Brazil)	p.35
75 Years after the Murder of Trotsky	p.36
Booklets on Russian Imperialism	p. 32
NEW BOOK: Building the Revolutionary Party	p.8
Books from the RCIT	p.38
RCIT: What do we stand for	p. 39

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# Throw Open the Gates of Europe to Refugees!

**Long live International Solidarity! Down with the Imperialist Fortress EU!  
Advance the Arab Revolution to Build Workers and Peasant Republics!**

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 15.9.2015*

1. Currently thousands of refugees – many from Syria – are trying to reach the European Union. In recent weeks tens of thousands have crossed the border. Against the determined campaign of the ruling classes in the EU, this migration has provoked a spontaneous wave of solidarity among huge sectors of the European working class and youth, particularly among many migrants already residing in the EU. This display of solidarity has in turn forced the governments of the EU and much of the media to temporarily change their approach, allowing many refugees to enter the EU. True socialists should, of course, welcome this spontaneous working class solidarity. However, on 13 September the German and Austrian government abruptly made a 180-degree turn and closed the borders. The central task now is not only to help these refugees, but also to create an organized movement based on the working class, the migrant communities, and the refugees in order to strengthen the solidarity against the inevitable backlash of the ruling class.

2. For a long time the EU has done everything in its power to block refugees – fleeing war and devastation in their homelands – from entering Europe. They have adopted various measures to strengthen the EU fortress including, setting up internal border controls, increasing the number of border guards, building a wall at the Hungarian-Serbian border, expanding the FRONTEX forces to stop refugees crossing the Mediterranean Sea, and adopting plans which include military operations in Libyan territorial waters and even the deployment of ground forces along the Libyan coast.

3. However, the obvious plight of millions of refugees, the so blatantly visible tragedy they have suffered, all this has provoked a spontaneous wave of working class solidarity with them. To give just a few examples: In Austria and Germany hundreds of people go every day to the main train stations, as well as to refugee camps, in order to help the incoming refugees. When the reactionary Orbán government in Hungary tried to block the arrival of refugees there, a convoy of 200 cars was formed which drove to Hungary in order to help the refugees reach Austria. Numerous organizations of Muslim migrant communities are organizing huge amounts of material support for refugees. In Iceland the right-wing government provoked a storm of enragement when it announced that the country could take only 50 (!) Syrian refugees. In response, Icelandic people organized a campaign in which 10,000 (!) people publicly pledged to take a Syrian family into their homes! And this in a country with a population of only 330,000 people! On 31 August 20,000 people in Vienna participated in a spontaneous demonstration in solidarity with the refugees. On 12 September similar mass demonstrations took place in additional European cities, including 90,000 in London. What an impressive show of international solidarity which demolishes all

myths about the “egotistical nature” of human beings! This is a spontaneous mass movement which formed *against* the will of all EU governments, *against* the long-standing campaigns of virtually all bourgeois mass media, and *without* the support of the “progressive” parties and trade unions.

4. As a result of this public display of human solidarity, the European governments have been forced to temporarily give in and allow the refugees enter the fortress. Similarly, various bourgeois media have changed the tone of their coverage. However, there should be no illusions: the ruling classes in Europe will do everything in their power to stop thousands of refugees coming to Europe and to quell this solidarity movement. As we have seen, on 13 September the German government closed its borders and the Austrian government quickly followed suite. The Polish and the Slovak governments have announced that they will only take Christian refugees from Syria – a country where nearly all people are Muslims! Fascist forces in eastern Germany are attacking the homes of asylum seeker. No doubt, we can soon expect to be exposed to media stories about “IS terrorists who are hiding among the refugees” in order to bring “death and horror to Europe.” We have already witnessed in recent years a huge racist media campaign – directed in particular against Muslim migrants. These incitements have resulted not only in daily attacks on Muslim migrants but also in the formation of racist mass movements like PEGIDA in Germany; such campaigns have also given rise to the passing of laws directed against Muslims, for example: the outlawing of specific forms of female Muslim dress; the prohibition of pro-Palestinian demonstrations in France during the last Gaza war; a law recently passed by the government of Austria which discriminates against Muslims relative to other religious communities, etc. We have every reason to expect that the ruling class and the right-wing racists will intensify such campaigns in the near future.

5. Furthermore, the ruling classes in the EU will use the refugee crisis as a pretext to intensify their wars in the Middle East. The US, Britain and France have launched a military campaign against Islamist rebels in Syria and Iraq. They claim that the Syrian refugee crisis is mainly due to the terror of Daesh (the so-called “Islamic State”). However, while Daesh is indeed a blood-thirsty, reactionary Salafi-Takfiri outfit, there is no doubt that most of the deaths and the creation of refugees in Syria have been caused by the horrendous and indiscriminate massacres and aerial bombings of Bashar al-Assad’s army! Millions of Syrians were forced to flee their country long before Daesh was even founded in 2013! In fact, it looks like the Western imperialists will also use the present migration crisis as a pretext to come to terms with the brutal regime of Bashar al-Assad, after a few years of having mostly criticized it.

This cynical shift yet further emphasizes how the Western imperialists are in fact an arch-enemy of the Arab and Muslim people!

6. What is the reason for the current upsurge in refugees now coming to Europe? It is simply that the ongoing wars, oppression by dictatorial regimes, and social misery in the Middle East and Africa have continued for years and years without an end in sight. Hundreds of thousands of Syrians have been slaughtered during the past four years – most of them by the forces of the Assad regime, a close ally of imperialist Russia which has also collaborated many times with US imperialism (e.g., Syria’s participation in the war against Iraq in 1991; its collusion in the CIA torture program, etc.). The people of Egypt are daily living in horror in face of the brutal military dictatorship of General Sisi – a close friend both of the Western as well as the Eastern great powers. The devastating war of the pro-Western gulf monarchies (with the support of General Sisi) in Yemen has already created 1.5 million refugees. Increasing economic misery, the direct result of the lengthening world-wide crisis of capitalism, the insatiable “land grabbing” by foreign corporations in Third-World nations, and the barbarous austerity programs imposed by the IMF on many Arab and African countries are all taking their toll, forcing more and more people to flee their native lands.

7. Until now, most refugees have remained in countries adjacent to the nation they fled. Turkey, a country of 77 million people, is home to 800,000 refugees. In Iran, a country of 78 million people, there are one million refugees. Lebanon, a country of only 4.4 million people is home to 1.1 million refugees. But these relatively poor countries can’t take any more refugees. This is why, from now on, many more refugees will try to reach Europe.

8. Socialists in Europe must actively participate in the spontaneous solidarity movement with refugees which we have been witnessing in recent weeks, but must also try to transform it into an organized mass movement of workers, youth, migrants, and refugees. Against the lies that “Europe cannot absorb the refugees” socialists should explain that the imperialist powers are primarily responsible for the misery in these countries. This distress

has been created by the European (and other imperialist) corporations, their banks, their financial institutions, their wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and by the brutality of their local allies and puppets in these countries!

9. Similarly, socialists in Europe should combine their support for the refugees with active solidarity for the liberation struggles of the workers and poor in the Maghreb and Mashreq. They should organize practical solidarity with the popular struggles in Syria against the blood-thirsty, dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad, in Egypt against the brutal military regime of General al-Sisi, in Libya against the pro-Western puppet “government” of General Haftar, and in Yemen against the foreign aggression of the al-Saud Gang. Such practical solidarity should come together with a socialist perspective of advancing the Arab Revolution to *expropriate the imperialist and domestic monopolies, overthrow the local corrupt elites, and create workers’ and fallahin republics.*

10. Furthermore, socialists should clearly expose the sham that Europe – with a population of more than 500 million persons – can only host 1.6 million refugees, despite its being far richer than countries like Turkey, Lebanon or Iran. As a matter of fact, today there are more than 11 million empty residences in Europe. This is enough to provide a place to live for all the homeless in Europe and still leave over enough empty flats to accommodate at least 7 million refugees! But the capitalist governments will not open the borders of Europe, because their system is for the rich, not the poor. There is no shortage of wealth in Europe. Just remember that the world’s richest 80 persons – amongst them 16 Western Europeans – hold the same amount of wealth as the world’s 3.6 billion poorest people. How many people could live in safety if we would expropriate this little group of super-rich parasites! Against the social-imperialist opposition of the labor bureaucracy and various reformists and centrists, socialists should raise the slogan “Open the Borders to Refugees!”

11. The alleged problems of finding accommodation for the refugees demonstrate once more the bankruptcy of the capitalist system. This cannot be otherwise in a system in which enterprises are the private property of a few oligarchs and production does not serve the needs of

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the people but the profits of a small, privileged minority. This demonstrates yet again the urgent need for a *working class revolution* in order to transfer the economy from the control of the capitalists to that of the society as a whole and to *plan production* according to the needs of the entire population.

12. The most crucial task for socialists in Europe, beyond simply helping refugees enter the EU and staying there, is to create an organized movement based on the working class, the migrant communities, and the refugees. Socialists should pressure the organizations of the workers' movement, in particular the trade unions, to mobilize support for the refugees. The workers' movement should call for a program of increased taxes and the expropriation of the super-rich parasites in order to finance massive public works programs. There should also be established committees of action in workplaces, neighborhoods and schools to organize support for refugees and to oppose the inevitable backlash of the capitalist governments and the fascists. Likewise, the need to build a united front between the workers' movement, the migrant communities, and refugees is urgent.

13. The Austrian section of the RCIT has participated in practical solidarity actions with the refugees from the very beginning of the current wave. In its campaign for the incoming municipal elections in Vienna (the Austrian section is running candidates in the biggest working class district where about half of the population are migrants), the comrades are raising, among other slogans, the call to "*Open the Borders for Refugees and Migrants!*" Our comrades form links of cooperation with many people who spontaneously participate in practical support or who give us clothes, toys, etc. for refugees in order to help. The RCIT is convinced that the present mass solidarity movement is a huge opportunity for the workers' movement in Europe to overcome the deep-seated prejudices of the labor aristocracy against people from poor countries of the South and to build links between the native and migrant popular masses. Supporting this movement and advancing

the political consciousness of its activist is therefore an important step for our goal to build a revolutionary world party of the workers and oppressed.

*\* For mass solidarity with the refugees!*

*\* Open Europe's Borders to Refugees!*

*\* For the rights of refugees and the immediate legalization of all migrants and asylum seekers! For the right of asylum for all those fleeing war, oppression, and poverty in their countries!*

*\* For full citizenship rights and the abolition of all discriminatory laws against migrants – regardless of nationality, race, or religion! Equal pay for equal work!*

*\* No to the EU anti-refugee plans! Down with the EU naval forces in the Mediterranean Sea! Defend Libya against any foreign intervention!*

*\* For committees of action in workplaces, neighborhoods and schools to organize support for refugees and to oppose the backlash of the capitalist governments and the fascists!*

*\* Build a united front between the workers' movement, the migrant communities and refugees!*

*\* Fight against discrimination of refugees (equal access to housing and the labor market, etc.)! Defend refugees against the state apparatus! Come to the aid of refugees in hiding who are threatened with deportation! Build armed self-defense units to fight against police brutality and racist thugs!*

*\* For a revolutionary migrants movement as part of a new World Party of Socialist Revolution – the Fifth Workers International!*

*International Secretariat of the RCIT*

(\*) Fallahin is the Arab plural noun for peasants.

***For our analyses on the refugee crisis, we refer readers to:***

RCIT: Europe / North Africa: Storm the Gates of Rome! Open Borders for Refugees! Stop the Imperialist EU-War against Refugees! No to the Preparations for an Imperialist Aggression against Libya! 22.5.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/eu-war-against-refugees/>

See photos of a solidarity action of the Austrian section of the RCIT here: <http://www.rkob.net/wien-wahl-2015/fluechtligen-helfen/> ■



*Comrades of the RCIT-Section in Austria bringing clothes to Refugees*

## Israel, Syria and the International Refugees Crisis

By Yossi Schwarz, *Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine)*, 19.9.2015

The difficult scenes of the suffering of refugees, mainly Syrian who wish to travel to countries like Germany and Austria, have brought to mind images of Jews who were transported in freight trains to death camps. The numbers written on the arms of these refugees only sharpened this memory.

In this context, it should be noted that all those political forces which supported breaking the back of the revolutionary struggle of the working class between the two world wars, preferring Nazism over the socialist revolution, bear responsibility for the Jewish Holocaust. This includes American, French and British imperialism, Stalinism, and the leadership of the Zionist movement. As one of the Warsaw ghetto fighters, the leader of the resistance wrote: *"Don't blame only the Nazis; they were all guilty."*

### The Causes of the Refugee Crisis

Today, the ones to blame for creating the suffering of millions of Syrian refugees are first of all the imperialist powers led by the United States, Britain and other European countries which initiated the First Gulf War (1991), thereby beginning the dismantling of the imperialist order established in the Middle East following World War I and II. The imperialist greed for oil and gas is the number one cause of today's refugee question.

Second place goes to the Assad regime in Syria, which is responsible for the mass slaughter of Syrian masses ever since the beginning of the protest movement in 2011. Iran which at one and the same time is prepared to serve US imperialism and give support to Assad is also responsible, as are Russian and Chinese imperialism, driven as they are by economic motives to support the corrupt regime of Assad.

The sectarian, outrageously murderous policy of arch-reactionary Daesh and al-Qaeda also contributes no small part to the creation of the refugee problem in Syria. While revolutionaries don't give these latter, despicable forces a shred of political support, in the war against the no less brutal Assad regime, supported as it is by Russian and Chinese imperialism, it is the duty of Marxists to support militarily any organization not subject to imperialism in its fight against imperialism. The Islamist movement in Syria, despite being utterly reactionary, dreaming as it does of a reestablishing a Caliphate, and despite the support in money and arms it receives from the venal, reactionary monarchic regimes of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, is not subject to imperialism.

To those socialists who are appalled at the notion of supporting militarily such Islamist movements because of their inherently ultra-reactionary nature, we have only to recall two precedents: the struggle of the self-proclaimed Mahdi of Sudan, Muhammad Ahmad, against British imperialism led by General Gordon in the 1880's, which was analyzed by Engels in terms of anti-imperialism and class struggle (1); and the struggle of the Riffian people, North African Berbers, against French and Spanish colonial occupation which was supported by the Communist International during Lenin and Trotsky's time. Were the Mahdi's movement and that led by Abd el-Krim in the short-lived Republic of Rif not Islamic fundamentalist in

nature?

Of course, the ultimate solution in Syria, as the entire region, is its unification by means of a democratic struggle led by the working class under a revolutionary communist leadership. This struggle will not stop with the creation of a bourgeois state but will move on to bring about a socialist revolution. However, today it is extremely difficult to see such a struggle on the horizon. This struggle will eventually come, but it will take time.

Meanwhile, demands must be made upon the imperialist countries to open their gates to the refugees and the handling of the refugees' needs should be given to the labor unions in cooperation with democratically elected committees of refugees themselves, as we have no confidence in the solutions of the capitalists and their representatives in parliament.

### The Syrian "Opposition Leader" Kamal al-Labwani

In response to the Syrian refugee crisis, the chairman of the Zionist Camp, Isaac Herzog, wrote on his Facebook page:

*"Jews cannot be indifferent when hundreds of thousands of refugees are begging for a safe haven. Our people experienced the silence of the world and therefore cannot remain indifferent in light of the murder and massacres taking place in Syria. This morning, I participated in the Shabbat Culture event hosted by the journalist Yoav Krakowski from the "Voice of Israel" [Israel state-run radio] and told him that yesterday I spoke with Kamal Labwani, a prominent leader of the Syrian opposition who was exiled from his country, and with whom I keep in close touch since the start of the civil war in Syria. Labwani asked in the name of the leaders of the Syrian opposition to initiate an international emergency conference to deal with the tragedy in Syria. I added that Israel should attend such a conference and participate in international efforts, including the supervised absorption of refugees and in the continuation of humanitarian measures already being carried out in Syria. The situation in Syria is extremely complex. Yesterday, Wahid Balous, the leader of the Druze in Syria, was murdered. The Druze are also threatened and persecuted there and this murder is just more oil spilled onto the dangerous fire burning there now."*

Of course, it's worth knowing exactly who this Kamal Labwani is, this Syrian opposition leader with whom Herzog maintains such close ties. It will come as no surprise to learn that that he is a friend of Israel and American imperialism, Dr. Kamal al-Labwani, submitted a publicized initiative whereby Israel was called to give to the Syrian opposition military and diplomatic assistance in its struggle against the Assad regime, as a preliminary step to peace and normalization with the future government of Syria. According to a report in the London daily *Al-Arab*, the initiative was coordinated with Arab and regional officials in cooperation with members of the US Congress, and it has received the blessing of senior officers and commanders in the Free Syrian Army. As part of its efforts to promote the initiative, al-Labwani travelled to secret meetings in Germany, and even expressed his readiness to visit Israel *"if this will serve the Syrian people, peace, and the peoples of the region."*

Dr. Kamal al-Labwani, a physician born in 1957, served two prison terms during the regime of Bashar al-Assad,

2001-2004 and 2005-2011, first for his role in the “Damascus Spring” and the other following a visit to Washington in which he met with American officials to discuss replacing Assad’s regime with one closer to the United States. In his 2005 trial he was convicted of “*harming the national security*” of Syria and was sentenced to 12 years in prison, but was released in November 2011 after having served half of his prison term as part of the regime’s attempts to placate domestic public opinion in the wake of the growing protests. After his release, al-Labwani participated in non-violent demonstrations which took place in Syria and called for replacing the regime. Not much later, al-Labwani decided to leave the country for fear of being arrested or assassinated, reached Jordan and was there granted political asylum in Sweden. From then on he focused the bulk of his activity in Turkey as a member of the *Syrian National Council*, and after its dissolution, as a member of the Secretariat General and of the Founding Committee of the *National Coalition of Revolutionary Forces* and the Syrian opposition. At the beginning of 2014, he resigned from the coalition, which he accused of financial and administrative corruption and reproducing the culture of conduct characteristic of the tyrannical Assad regime, and began to act independently.

In recent months, in a series of articles and interviews in the Arabic, Israeli, and Western press and television media, al-Labwani announced his initiative to promote cooperation between the Syrian opposition and Israel, which would lead – after the conclusion of the civil war in Syria and the overthrow of the current regime – to a close peace and normalization between the two countries. The background to this initiative, as al-Labwani explained, was the impasse which the civil war had reached in Syria, meaning the military status quo on the ground and the failure of diplomatic talks which had taken place in Geneva under the auspices of the United States, Russia, and the United Nations. According to al-Labwani, cooperation with Israel, which enjoys military power and political influence in the international arena, particularly in the US, could possibly help the Syrian opposition to tip the balance of military power and diplomatic efforts in its favor, end the ongoing bloodbath in Syria, and ultimately defeat the Assad regime. The main military

role al-Labwani suggested for Israel under the proposed cooperation focused on establishing a restricted flying zone in southern Syria from within Israel’s border without Israel’s penetrating Syrian territory by land. According to his plan, Israel would intercept any Syrian fighter plane a moment after its take off using the anti-aircraft systems at its disposal which cover a range of over a hundred kilometers stretching from the Golan Heights to Damascus, and which includes, among other places, al-Soidaa, Daraa, the southern portion of the Damascus countryside, and the Syrian-Lebanese border. NATO, for its part, would be responsible for attacking Assad’s military airports. As part of the diplomatic role Al-Labwani allocated to Israel, the latter would be asked to remove its opposition to the toppling of the Assad regime and would agree to the transfer of arms from the West to the opposition forces.

Al-Labwani highlighted a series of strategic assets which his initiative would give Israel, and which would make it serve the shared interest of both sides: On the security level, it will thwart plans by Hezbollah to set up in the Golan launching bases similar those it has in southern Lebanon; the Syrian opposition led by him will commit itself to remove the military option against Israel; and the opposition will work to establish, after the establishment of a legitimate government in Syria, a peace treaty subject to an agreement on the Golan Heights.

Regarding the fate of the Golan Heights as part of a future peace agreement between the sides, Al-Labwani was somewhat vague about the exact details of the proposed arrangement. In an interview with *Al-Arab*, he hinted that the Syrian opposition should give up the Golan Heights in exchange for Israeli cooperation in overthrowing the Assad regime, or “sell” it to Israel, as he put it, rather than lose all of Syria. (2)

In short, we see that Al-Labwani is a top-notch agent of imperialism, bending the struggle against Assad to the needs of the United States and Israel.

### Israel Opposed to Refugees

This does not mean that we shouldn’t demand that the gates of the State of Israel be opened to Syrian refugees and even more so to the Palestinian refugees who were



Almedina Gunic (Leader of the RCIT) with Syrian refugee children

expelled by Israel 1947-48. Of course, bourgeois Zionist Israel will never dare do this, and the solution will ultimately come within the framework of a different type of state, democratic and red.

However the Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel vehemently rejects the entry of Syrian refugees into Israel for the usual reasons that we now hear echoed by the right-wing government in Hungary: the demographic threat.

*"Israel is a very small country, with no demographic or geographic depth, and we must therefore control our borders against the entrance of illegal migrant infiltrators to say nothing of terrorists. This is what we did for our border with Sinai, where we have stopped all infiltration."* (3)

This does not mean that in Netanyahu's memory there are not images of Jewish war refugees from World War II. Recently he said: *"We already have a historical memory of what happened when Europe labeled Jewish products."* True, he wasn't referring to the Palestinian refugees expelled by Israel in 1947-48 or to Syrian refugees today, but rather to the products of the settlers who, under state auspices, stole Palestinian lands which Israel occupied in 1967, as a continuation of the 1948 Nakba. This was Netanyahu's reaction to the decision of the European Parliament which in a vote of 525 for and 70 against, decided to mark the products of the settlers as such.

### Imperialist Boycott and Working Class Boycott

The European parliament is not attempting to prevent the suffering of the Palestinians, for if it were it would have ended its political and military support for Israel a long time ago. The struggle of the Palestinian people which has neither surrendered nor been broken despite constant repression, is what ostensibly drives the Europeans to seek

a solution precisely in the framework of their surrender and the re-establishment of the imperialist order just as the latter is crumbling.

The Israeli right-wingers are correct when they claim that this decision of the European Parliament is a step towards a general boycott of Israel. We also understand that a boycott on Israel would be a real step towards war, and this is certainly not on the historical agenda today, and therefore the European Parliament isn't talking about a total boycott against Israel, but only a limited one. As revolutionary Marxists we are of course in favor of actions by trade unions, academics, and the consumers of food products against the oppression of all the Palestinian people from the river to the sea, but we do not support a boycott of the hypocritical imperialist countries against the imperialistic State of Israel just as we wouldn't support any party in a war between Europe and Israel, but rather would call for transforming such a war into one of the working class and the poor against the capitalists and their governments: *"Peace to the shacks! War on the palaces!"*

On the other hand, we will not oppose this boycott, since opposition to it would be support for Israel. The correct position is to encourage the BDS movement and to abstain from supporting the position of the European Parliament.

### Footnotes:

(1) See on this e.g. Friedrich Engels: On the History of Early Christianity (1894), in: MECW Vol. 27, p. 448. See also Vladimir Borisovich Lutsky: Modern History of the Arab Countries, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1969, Chapter XIX: The Mahdi State In The East Sudan, pp. 258-261

(2) Ophir Winter: Senior Syrian opposition leader publicly calls to be assisted by Israel, 30/5/2014, The Institute of the Middle East Media Research

(3) Netanyahu on refugee absorption: 'Israel is a very small country, we must control our borders', NANA, 09.06.2015, <http://news.nana10.co.il/Article/?ArticleID=1146856> ■

# New Book!

## Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE*. The book's subtitle is: *Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. The book is in English-language. It contains four chapters on 148 pages and includes 42 pictures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

A few months ago, our movement commemorated its 25th anniversary. In the summer of 1989 our predecessor organization, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) was founded as a democratic-centralist international tendency based on an elaborated program. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) continues the revolutionary tradition of the LRCI. Below we give an overview of our history, an evaluation of its achievements as well as mistakes, and a summary of the lessons for the struggles ahead. This book summarizes our theoretical and practical experience of the past

25 years.

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Bolshevik- Communists' theoretical conception of the role of the revolutionary party and its relation to the working class. In Chapter II we elaborate on the essential characteristics of revolutionary party respective of the pre-party organization. In Chapter III we deal with the history of our movement – the RCIT and its predecessor organization. Finally, in Chapter IV we outline the main lessons of our 25 years of organized struggle for building a Bolshevik party and their meaning for our future work.

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/rcit-party-building/> ■

**Building the  
Revolutionary Party  
in Theory  
and Practice**

*Looking Back and Ahead after  
25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency



# Greek Elections Result in Victory for the Reformist SYRIZA

## The Central Task Now is to Prepare for the Coming Class Battles and to Forge a New Workers' Party with a Revolutionary Program!

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 22.9.2015*

1. The Greek elections on 20 September resulted in a victory for SYRIZA, a bourgeois workers party, and a defeat for the main bourgeois party New Democracy (ND). The new leftist party LAE (Popular Unity), which recently split from SYRIZA, got only 2.86% of the votes, below the required threshold, and therefore just missed entering the parliament. Tsipras already announced the continuation of his popular front government together with the right-wing populist ANEL party. Here are the official results compared with those from the previous elections in January 2015. (See Table below)

2. These results are remarkable for several reasons. Participation in the election was down to 56.6%, 7% less than that in the January election. Nearly all parties lost votes. Nevertheless the reformist Tsipras leadership succeeded in convincing the majority of the working class that it is the lesser of two evils when compared to the main party of the Greek bourgeoisie, New Democracy. Hence, while SYRIZA lost more than 300,000 votes, it still remained the preferred option for Greek workers despite its treacherous support for the barbaric Third Memorandum dictated by the EU. It succeeded in doing so because Tsipras managed to present the election as a struggle between SYRIZA and ND and, faced with this alternative, Greek workers preferred "their" party compared to that of the bourgeoisie. This only emphasizes how much more struggle, experience and intervention of revolutionaries will be necessary to break the working class from the reformist SYRIZA leadership.

3. The fascist *Golden Dawn* (XA) was able to slightly increase its vote to 7%. While this represents no breakthrough, it means that the Nazis have managed to consolidate themselves in third place from where they are

well-positioned for future successes. There is no doubt that, given the inevitable future betrayals of the SYRIZA-led government, the fascists will profit from wholesale worker disillusionment if a new, militant workers' party fighting against the EU's and the government's austerity attacks does not emerge in time.

4. The *Communist Party* (KKE), another left-reformist, bourgeois workers' party, retained their meager 5.5% result from the January elections. This means that they were entirely unable to gain from SYRIZA's betrayal. This is hardly surprising given the KKE's sectarian denouncement of SYRIZA, relinquishing a united front tactic which manifested itself when these Stalinists actually abstained in the fateful and historic 5 July referendum. All in all, after nearly seven years of crisis, numerous general strikes and political instability of the bourgeois rule, the Stalinist KKE is weaker than before. Nevertheless, it would be an error to ignore KKE's control of important sectors of the workers' vanguard. Likewise, it is clear that despite the apparent monolithic unity of the party, many supporters are dissatisfied with the party's line.

5. *Popular Unity* (LAE), the recent left split from SYRIZA, got more than 150,000 votes which meant that, with 2.9% of the vote, they failed to cross the 3% threshold required to enter the parliament. Their voting numbers reflect that this new force managed to rally a significant sector of the workers' vanguard. At the same time it failed to win over larger sectors of the working class which still adheres to SYRIZA. It is likely that LAE – a coalition of left-reformist and centrist forces – will now undergo an internal crisis. Those former SYRIZA functionaries who joined LAE in order to keep their parliamentary posts, will probably soon leave the new party. It also means that LAE

**Table: Results of the Greek Election in September 2015  
(compared with the Results from January 2015)**

Party	Seats	Percent	Votes
<i>Figures for the January 2015 Election in parentheses</i>			
Syriza	145 (149)	35.47% (36.34%)	1,920,837 (2,246,064)
New Democracy (ND)	75 (76)	28.09% (27.81%)	1,521,327 (1,718,815)
Golden Dawn (XA)	18 (17)	6.99% (6.28%)	378,732 (388,447)
Pasok	17 (13)	6.28% (4.68%)	340,190 (289,482)
KKE	15 (15)	5.55% (5.47%)	300,465 (338,138)
To Potami	11 (17)	4.09% (6.05%)	221,345 (373,868)
Anel	10 (13)	3.69% (4.75%)	199,782 (293,371)
Union of Centrists	9	3.43%	185,939
Popular Unity (LAE)	–	2.86%	154,716
ANTARSYA-EEK	–	0.85% (0.68% *)	46,016 (41,896)

(\* For the ANTARSYA-EEK block we have combined the votes of the two forces when they ran separately in the January elections, receiving 0.64% and 0.04% respectively.)

is now under more pressure to prove itself as an activist party mobilizing on the streets and in the workplaces and trade unions. Under these conditions, and given the fact that the new force is still politically unconsolidated, it is urgent that revolutionaries intervene in the debates in LAE and try to win supporters for a revolutionary program and perspective.

6. ANTARSYA-EEK slightly increased their combined votes, but still gained only 0.8% of the ballots cast. ANTARSYA, an alliance of various centrist groups, has also failed to grow during recent years of the deep capitalist crisis and mass class struggles. We repeat our criticism that they have failed to apply the united front tactic by putting forth demands to SYRIZA and finding ways to engage the workers who trust the latter party in joint activities. Likewise, if ANTARSYA would have found a way to run together with LAE on a joint list both would have entered the parliament and used it as tribune to denounce the popular front government.

7. All in all the workers' parties increased their share of the votes compared with the 25 January elections. The combined vote of (reformist and centrist) workers' parties was 44.7% compared with 42.5% 8 months ago. These numbers exhibit a dramatic change in support of the left when compared to the situation in the period between the 1970s and the beginning of the 2000s when workers parties (mainly the KKE) got no more than 10% of the votes.

8. Revolutionaries should now raise the slogan for a SYRIZA-KKE government which rejects the Memorandum. Of course we are well aware that the respective leaderships of SYRIZA and the KKE would not implement such demands. But such agitation would help revolutionaries get a hearing among the supporters of these parties. They should combine such a slogan with propaganda for a workers' government, i.e., one based on workers' and popular councils and militias whose goal is to expropriate the capitalist class and to open the road to working class power.

9. It would be wrong to believe that there is a politically stable future for the renewed SYRIZA-ANEL government. Quite the contrary, as the effects of the Third Memorandum are soon to be felt by the people in the coming months and only more attacks lie ahead. Rather it is far more likely that there will be new class struggles and internal tensions in SYRIZA.

10. To manage these challenges revolutionaries are now faced with two crucial tasks. It is decisive that they intervene in the ongoing debates among the workers' vanguard. They should advocate the formation of a workers' party – which most likely would be composed from forces in LAE, ANTARSYA, EEK, OKDE as well as potentially left splits from the KKE and SYRIZA. They should argue for a revolutionary program and a plan of battle for the looming class struggles. Likewise, revolutionaries should argue for the application of the united front tactic calling for joint struggles of all workers' parties (among which SYRIZA is of course the largest force). Such a tactic is necessary not because it can be easily realized (the hardened bureaucracy of SYRIZA and KKE may never agree to it), but because it is the best way to engage in joint activities with those workers who still adhere to these parties and who still form the bulk of the workers' movement. Under such conditions,

revolutionaries will find it easier to get these workers to listen to their criticism of these leaderships. The RCIT looks forward to collaborating with all revolutionaries who agree with such a perspective!

*International Secretariat of the RCIT*

**For our analyses on Greece, we refer readers to:**

\* RCIT: Upcoming Elections in Greece: Down with the Pro-Memorandum Parties! Critical Support for LAE (Popular Unity)! For a New Workers' Party with a Revolutionary Program! For Working Class Internationalism instead of Narrow-minded, Nationalistic Left Reformism! 13.9.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/critical-vote-for-lae/>

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\* RCIT: SYRIZA betrays Greece's Workers and Poor – "OXI" was not meant as a "YES" to another austerity program! For the organization of mass resistance against the betrayal of the Tsipras government! Left wing in SYRIZA: Fight against the party leaders who are lackeys of the EU-Bosses! 11.7.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/syriza-betrayal/>

\* RCIT: 61.3% Vote OXI in the Greek Referendum: A Victory for the Entire European Working Class! A battle has been won, but the war against the EU and IMF continues! Nationalize the banks and media under workers' control! 6.7.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-after-referendum/>

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\* RCIT: Referendum in Greece on 5 July: Vote OXI! against the EU-Troika! No to any Austerity Program! Break with the EU and IMF! Nationalize the Banks and Media under Workers' Control! 30.6.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-referendum-oxi/>

\* RCIT: Greetings to All Greek Socialists Who Are Campaigning for a Vote of OXI in 5 July Referendum, 3.7.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-solidarity-greetings/>

\* Brazil Trade Unionists: Solidarity with the Greek Resistance against the EU-Troika! <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/brazil-solidarity-with-greece/>

\* RCIT: Greece: No to the Surrender of the SYRIZA Leadership! 26.2.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/syriza-surrenders/>

\* RCIT: Greek Elections: SYRIZA Wins ... and Forms an Alliance with Reactionary Racists! 27.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-syriza-anel/>

\* RCIT: Elections in Greece: Vote SYRIZA but Don't Trust the Tsipras Leadership! Organize the Struggle in Workplaces, Schools, and on the Streets! Fight for a Workers' Government! 22.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-election-statement/>

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\* RCIT: Greece: Down with the Trial against Savas Michael-Matsas! 23.7.2013, [www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-solidarity-with-savas-matsas](http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-solidarity-with-savas-matsas)

\* Nina Gunić: Solidarity with the Hunger Strike in Greece! Forward to a Revolutionary Migrant Movement! April 2013, [www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-solidarity-with-migrant-strike](http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-solidarity-with-migrant-strike)

\* Michael Pröbsting: After the elections on 17th June: A new phase of the Greek Revolution is beginning! 19.6.2012, [www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-after-17-6-elections](http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-after-17-6-elections)

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\* Michael Pröbsting: After SYRIZA's victory in the Greek elections: The question of a Workers Government and the revolutionary way forward, May 2012, [www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/after-the-greek-elections](http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/after-the-greek-elections)

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# Greek Elections: Critical Support for LAE (Popular Unity)!

## For a New Workers' Party with a Revolutionary Program! For Working Class Internationalism instead of Narrow-minded, Nationalistic Left Reformism!

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 13.9.2015*

1. The upcoming 20 September spot elections in Greece are taking place at a crucial moment. They are the result of a manoeuvre by SYRIZA's leadership – with the support of European imperialism – to confuse the popular masses at the moment of their greatest betrayal. On 5 July nearly 62% of the people voted OXI (No) against the austerity policy dictated by the EU-Troika. However, only a few days later the Tsipras government betrayed the popular will. It accepted and passed in parliament the so-called *Third Memorandum* which is far worse than any other EU dictate previously imposed on Greece!

2. However, a minority of SYRIZA's MP voted against the Third Memorandum and ultimately split from the party. This left wing – together with others – has founded a new party called *Λαϊκή Ενότητα* (*Laiki Enótita* [LAE] which means *Popular Unity*) which is led by the former Minister of Energy in the Tsipras cabinet, Panagiotis Lafazanis. LAE denounced the capitulation of Tsipras to the EU as well as its collaboration with the Zionist Apartheid state of Israel. It proposes Greece's exit from the EU and the Eurozone and opposes the country's membership in NATO.

3. However, as we have outlined in our last statement, the LAE leadership supports a reformist, popular-frontist, and nationalist program. It is spreading illusionary hopes for growth and wealth for the people via a Keynesian state-capitalist program of investments and social reforms *without* overthrowing the ruling capitalist class. Its program for a "*patriotic popular front*" aims to form alliances with "progressive" sectors of the bourgeoisie. While the party has still not been completely consolidated, it's clear that it is aspiring to become a new version of SYRIZA, i.e., the party which just demonstrated its inability to serve the interests of the working class and the popular masses!

4. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) calls for Greek workers and oppressed to *critically* cast their vote for LAE in the upcoming elections. We support LAE *not* because of its program but because, in the present situation, it represents that sector of the workers' vanguard which played a crucial role in organizing the OXI movement and which ultimately broke with the dominant reformist party, SYRIZA. It is precisely this sector of the workers' vanguard which can play a central role in the next period of class struggle. Therefore, this is the sector to which revolutionaries should orient themselves, with the aim of helping these workers overcome their illusions in left reformism. Consequently, revolutionaries should combine agitation for a critical vote for LAE with criticism of its program, while making demands on its leadership to mobilize mass actions against the austerity policy in the workplaces, schools and on the streets – both before and after the elections.

5. We do *not* call for a critical vote for the Stalinist KKE, which is just another left-reformist party. While they also voted against the Third Memorandum, the sectarianism

of their leadership during the period leading up to the historic referendum of 5 July made certain that they will not be capable of forging any links with the historic OXI movement. Instead, the KKE leadership foolishly remains steadfast in its attempts to build a caricature-like "Socialism in one Party," hoping for better days ahead.

6. Neither do we call for a vote for the alliance of ANTARSYA and EEK. While their joint program is certainly far more progressive than that of LAE, they represent only small forces among the Greek electorate. We contend that, in a period like the present one, it is crucial for revolutionaries to orient themselves to those sectors of the workers' vanguard which are moving leftward. As a matter of fact, ANTARSYA – a coalition of centrist organizations – has failed to organize the workers' vanguard despite enjoying most favorable conditions. After four or five years of repeated general strikes, pre-revolutionary and revolutionary situations, ANTARSYA – irrespective of the courageous and valuable work of many of the comrades working inside it – is no stronger electorally than it was previously. All the important political developments we have witnessed – the rapid growth of SYRIZA, the rise of the OXI movement, the split within SYRIZA and the creation of LAE – all have taken place in sectors which, because of its sectarianism, ANTARSYA has ignored in the past years.

7. It is crucial that revolutionaries engage in the political debates *within* LAE and put forth a transitional program of action. No less important, revolutionaries should see to it that LAE becomes an activist party, organizing mass mobilizations against the upcoming attacks on the working class and the popular masses. Revolutionaries should frankly and openly explain that the most important arena of class struggle is *not* electoral politics but rather on the streets and in the workplaces, schools, and universities. Consequently they should agitate for a battle plan oriented to the formation of *action committees in all workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, universities, and villages*; and mobilize for indefinite general strikes and occupations as well as for the formation of *self-defense units* to defend the workers' movement against the fascists and the police. Revolutionaries should explain that capitalism cannot be overthrown by general strikes but only by an armed insurrection of the working class and youth.

8. Advocating such a program and tactics must be combined with the building of a *revolutionary workers' party on the national level as part of a new workers' international*. Such a revolutionary party must fight for a socialist revolution in Greece and throughout Europe. The RCIT calls upon all revolutionaries who agree with such a perspective for the Greek and international revolution to join forces. We look forward to working together with Greek socialists in implementing such a political and organizational program!

# Greece: SYRIZA Splits after Tsipras Capitulates to the EU

## For a new Workers' Party with a Revolutionary Program instead of nationalist narrow-minded Left Reformism!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 25.8.2015

1. Greece's ruling left-reformist party, SYRIZA, has split. The new splinter group is called *Λαϊκή Ενότητα* (*Laiki Enótita* [LAE] which means *Popular Unity*). It comprises 25 former SYRIZA parliamentary deputies, currently making it the third-largest faction in the Greek parliament, and is led by the former Minister of Energy in the Tsipras cabinet, Panagiotis Lafazanis. LAE justifiably criticizes the capitulation of Tsipras to the EU which resulted in the so-called *Third Memorandum* even though his 5 July referendum against the EU-imposed austerity policy won with an overwhelming OXI-Vote. LAE also criticizes the collaboration of the Tsipras-government with the Zionist Apartheid state of Israel. The new party calls for a return to Greece's old currency – the *Drachma* – and an exit from NATO. In addition, LAE correctly calls for mass mobilizations against the Memorandum.

2. The split is a result of the historic betrayal of the Tsipras-government. Against the explicit vote of the Greek people – 61.3% of whom voted "OXI" in the referendum on 5 July – the government capitulated to massive pressure from the imperialist *European Union* and accepted the *Third Memorandum*. This memorandum constitutes a brutal attack against the Greek working class and the poor. Increases of VAT mean that estimated expenses for the average Greek household will rise by €650 a year. In addition there will be further cuts in social welfare and pensions as well as further attacks on labor rights. All of this comes in a situation in which the Greek workers have already suffered an 18% decline of real wages since 2007 and unemployment is so high that only 49.4% of the population aged 15–64 had a job at the end of 2014 (by way of comparison the figures are 71.9% for Britain and 61.7% for Portugal). Also, as part of the *Third Memorandum*,

numerous neo-liberal deregulations of businesses are to be introduced which will doubtless result in the ruin of large numbers of small shops: many of the 15,000 local bakeries and the 11,000 pharmacies in Greece are endangered.

3. Furthermore the Tsipras-government has agreed to a wholesale privatization of the country, selling vast swaths of its resources to foreign corporations. According to the Memorandum, public assets worth €50 billion are to be handed over to a new privatization trust fund in order to be sold to private capitalists. 14 airports are expected to be privatized as are huge chunks in the Greek sectors of water, energy, oil, highways, the postal service, and telecommunication – in short: the whole country is up for sale to the imperialist sharks! Finally, the Tsipras government is to relinquish power over vast areas of economic and social policymaking to its Eurozone creditors under the draconian terms it agreed to for a new three-year bailout. LAE leader Lafazanis rightly accused Tsipras: "I feel ashamed for you. We no longer have a democracy ... but a Eurozone dictatorship."

4. The whole political development of the SYRIZA-led government – its transformation in a matter of only a few months from a supposedly anti-capitalist party into a servant of EU imperialism which is now implementing the total sell-out of the country – demonstrates the bankruptcy of left-reformism. It is a model of the cul-de-sac of the reformist road which is propagated by SYRIZA and its allies in the Party of the European Left which includes the German LINKE, the French PCF and others. It confirms the warnings of revolutionaries, including the RCIT, who stated as early as 2012 that the left-reformist SYRIZA leadership will betray the working class.

5. The split of SYRIZA's left wing with Tsipras is

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therefore a progressive and long overdue development. It is clear that, in contrast to their original intentions and wishes, the leaders of the party's left-wing decided to split only after coming under massive pressure from the vanguard sectors of the working class and militant youth. Socialists should welcome this split and the formation of LAE as a step in the right direction.

6. Naturally, it would be unwise to ignore the political shortcomings of LAE. As a matter of fact most its deputies went along with Tsipras for seven long months during which he already committed a number of political crimes. These included the formation of a coalition government with the right-wing racist party ANEL, the election of a leading conservative politician, Prokopis Pavlopoulos, as the new President of Greece, and the various deals the government signed with the EU. LAE's program is basically a repetition of the old SYRIZA program with the important difference that it calls for an exit from the EU and a return to the Drachma.

7. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) supports the slogan calling for the exit of semi-colonial countries like Greece from the imperialist EU and the Euro. However, we support such an exit *only* as a tactical step to weaken the grip of the imperialist powers over Greece. Furthermore, such an exit will liberate the country from the "Eurozone dictatorship" only *IF* it is combined with a series of other measures. In particular, it is crucial to fight for an *immediate cancellation of all Greece's debts* as well as the *immediately nationalization of all banks and financial institutions and the placement of industrial and service corporations under workers' control*.

8. LAE erroneously believes in a model of isolated national economic growth under conditions of a capitalist economy (albeit with a strong state-capitalist sector). The failure of such a strategy has already been demonstrated by LAE's name giver – the 1970-73 Chilean government led by the tragic Salvador Allende which failed and was finally overthrown by a bloody military coup. Isolated national left reformism is a tragic illusion. As long as the country is dominated by corporate bosses, shipping oligarchs and financial sharks, there can be no growth which benefits the popular masses. Only a workers' government based on popular councils and militias which expropriates the capitalist robbers offers a way out of the misery. Simultaneously, revolutionaries in Greece as well as throughout Europe should fight for a program calling for the *United Socialist States of Europe*.

9. The central task now for revolutionaries is to combine flexible tactics with programmatic intransigence. Revolutionaries in Greece should recognize that the formation of LAE reflects an important political break of the workers' vanguard from the SYRIZA leadership. By definition such a new party is in flux and will experience many internal debates. Therefore, revolutionaries in Greece should intervene in this process and participate in these debates. It seems to us that the best way to do this in the current situation is to join LAE and help socialist workers and youth moving to the left to draw the right conclusions from the experience of SYRIZA's betrayal. Revolutionaries should be critical – sharply in content but pedagogically in tone – of the failures of the left-reformist program of the LAE founders. They should explain that, if the new party becomes a pro-Drachma version of the

old SYRIZA, in the end its fate will inevitably be like that of SYRIZA, i.e., it will become a traitor party. Such a path must be avoided at all costs. To advance the cause and prevent such a development, it seems to us sensible that revolutionaries should join LAE as an independent faction and openly struggle to win over a majority of the party members to a revolutionary program of action.

10. Naturally, LAE will put forth a list of candidates for the upcoming 20 September elections and it is right that they do so. However, revolutionaries should explain that the most important area of class struggle is not in the electoral fields but on the streets and in the workplaces, schools, and universities. They should therefore agitate for a battle plan oriented to the formation of *action committees in all workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, universities, and villages* and mobilize for indefinite general strikes and occupations as well as for the formation of *self-defense units* to defend the workers' movement against the fascists and the police. Revolutionaries should explain that capitalism cannot be overthrown by general strikes but only by an armed insurrection of the working class and youth.

11. Whatever will be the upcoming developments, in the end the crucial task is to form a concrete material force to implement programs and strategies, i.e., a *revolutionary workers' party on the national level as part of a new workers' international*. Such a revolutionary party must fight for a socialist revolution in Greece and throughout Europe. We call upon all revolutionaries who agree with such a perspective for the Greek and international revolution to join forces. The RCIT looks forward to working together with Greek socialists in implementing such a political and organizational program!

*International Secretariat of the RCIT* ■



## SYRIZA betrays Greece's Workers and Poor!

**"OXI" was not meant as a "YES" to another austerity program! For the organization of mass resistance against the betrayal of the Tsipras government! Left wing in SYRIZA: Fight against the party leaders who are lackeys of the EU-Bosses!**

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 11.7.2015*

1. In an historical vote, more than 61% of Greek voters gave a clear response of "OXI" ("NO" in Greek language) to the bailout program proposed by the European Union in the referendum held on 5 July. Yet, despite this great victory, it took the Greek government just 5 days to agree with the EU bosses on a huge austerity program which is now presented as a compromise between the wish of the Greek people and the demands of the EU. The bitter reality is crystal clear to the Greek masses: The Tsipras-government has betrayed them in record time.

2. This betrayal was being prepared well before the referendum was even conducted. On 28 June Tsipras wrote a letter to the IMF, the European Central Bank, and the European Commission in which he agreed on the general line of the demands from the imperialist bloodsuckers. The referendum was just a tool to calm the Greek workers and poor and to strengthen the position of the Greek government in their negotiations with the EU Bosses. The result of this pre-planned betrayal is a new bailout program, developed by the EU Bosses and the Tsipras Government and passed by the Greek parliament with 251 votes in favor and just 32 votes against.

3. The €13bn austerity measures for one year and the €53bn for three years are mainly composed of massive attacks on the living standard of the Greek workers and poor. The bourgeois media presents the increase in VAT as a measure mainly hitting the restaurants for which the tax rate is being increased from 13 to 23%. In reality the VAT is being doubled on vital products like water, energy, and basic foodstuffs from 6.5% to 13%! This is a huge attack on the working class and the poor who will be the main victims of the increase of this regressive tax!

4. In addition, the measures of the new traitorous bailout deal will entirely phase out the solidarity grant for poor pensioners by 2019 and the retirement age will be set at 67 for all workers. Furthermore, the privatization of the former public telecom giant Hellenic Telecoms (OTE) will be completed. The largest part of the bailout program is a slap in the face of all workers and poor.

5. The leadership of SYRIZA characterizes the austerity program as an achievement because it also includes a ridiculous increase of corporate taxes from 26 to 28% in addition to its paying lip service to a fight on tax evasion. These pseudo measures against the rich are nothing compared to the soaking of the Greek people. No wonder that we already witnessed the first protest during the parliamentary session on Friday night when more than 8,000 people demonstrated against the ongoing betrayal by SYRIZA. The activists were mainly organized by the trade union PAME and some left wing supporters of SYRIZA.

6. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) condemns the Tsipras-led government and the SYRIZA leadership for their betrayal of the interests of

the Greek working class and poor. In the past we have warned the Greek people that the leaders of SYRIZA will get down on their knees before the imperialist EU institutions and kiss the shoes of the financial sharks. The massive mobilization during the referendum showed the power and the will of the Greek people. It is now urgent to use this power and willingness to get rid of the imperialist parasites and their Greek lackeys.

7. We call upon the Greek labor movement to give a resounding response to the new austerity program by immediately beginning mass protests and strikes. An indefinite general strike must be organized to successfully fight back against the new bailout plan. The Greek workers, youth, and poor need to organize themselves in action committees in the proletarian districts, the villages, the workplaces, and the schools. These action committees have to form self-defense units to protect the strikes and especially the general strike against attacks which will inevitably follow by the fascist organizations and the repression apparatus, i.e., the police and the army.

8. We support the first demonstration against the new bailout plan which was organized by the trade union of the KKE, PAME, on Friday night. We call the members of the Stalinist KKE to break with their sectarian approach towards the supporters of SYRIZA and to join forces with all activists who are willing to fight against the austerity plan of the government. It makes no sense to condemn, as the KKE did, the activists who had or even still have illusions in SYRIZA. Rather, we call upon all honest supporters of SYRIZA who are disappointed by the outcome of the parliamentary vote to organize themselves in a mass movement against the austerity program and to fight the Tsipras leadership on the street.

9. In addition, we call upon all honest supporters of SYRIZA to form a radical left wing based on an *anti-austerity* program to fight against the capitalist crisis. Such a radical left wing must also challenge the current inappropriate leadership of SYRIZA. In this fight for the leadership it is vital that the radical left wing be willing to break with SYRIZA if it proves impossible to get rid of Tsipras' betraying leadership, and to build a new authentic revolutionary party of the workers and the poor. In our opinion, such a new workers' party should be based on a revolutionary program which calls for smashing the capitalist system via a socialist revolution. This is the only way out of the capitalist crisis. It is important to open the doors to all workers and activists who are now willing to build a revolutionary alternative but who are not organized in SYRIZA. This is especially important because we cannot trust the MPs of the left-wing to join us in the subsequent fight against the leadership of SYRIZA. Yesterday we witnessed this yet again: Only two MPs of SYRIZA voted against the austerity plan, eight of them abstained, and seven didn't even bother to show up for

the vote. This is the demeaning behavior exhibited by a so-called left-wing when it confronts a massive betrayal by the Tsipras leadership! All activists of SYRIZA must now organize themselves, convene assemblies to discuss all the issues at hand, and vote democratically on all decisions to be made by the party, including the opportunity to replace the current leadership who betrayed the cause with new leaders whom they trust. But it is important that the new leaders be recallable at any time by the assemblies and conferences of the delegates of these assemblies.

10. It is time to topple the new austerity program, to form a radical left opposition in SYRIZA, to prepare the break with the Tsipras leadership, to unite the forces of all workers, youth, and poor no matter whether they support the KKE, PAME, SYRIZA, ANTARSYA or other organizations of the labor movement. It is time to join forces and prepare the implementation of an indefinite general strike to prevent the shifting of the entire capitalist crisis to the backs of the workers and the poor. We call upon all Greek workers and poor to fight for:

*\* The immediate cancellation of all cuts and austerity measures against the workers and the poor! The immediate cessation of all negotiations and payments to the financial sharks of the IMF and the institutions of the European Union! Break with the EU and prepare the Grexit as a means of getting rid of the imperialist parasites! Cancel all Greek debts!*

*\* The abolition of all indirect, regressive taxes such as VAT! The institution of massive taxation on profits, on the property of the rich, and the expropriation of the superrich! Cessation of all ongoing privatizations and cancellation of all those conducted during the past several years! Nationalization of the banks, large*

*corporations, and wholesale trade and transport, social services, health services, education, and the communication media, without compensation and their placement under workers' control!*

*\* Bring a halt to tax evasion of capitalists who even now are transferring their wealth to other countries! Complete expropriation of all funds associated with fake companies! Abolish all opportunities for multinational corporations to move their profits and losses within their business group across countries for the purpose of tax benefits! Confiscation of capital in the so-called tax havens!*

*\* Build action committees and self defense units of the workers, the youth, and the poor to organize and protect an indefinite general strike! Such action committees can later be transformed into popular councils (soviets) and become the basis of a new workers' government! A new workers' government based on popular councils will end the capitalist crisis and open the road towards Socialism!*

*\* Workers of Europe: Join the fight of your Greek brothers and sisters against the capitalist crisis! Build international solidarity actions with the Greek people to fight together against the imperialist bloodsuckers and their lackeys! Put pressure on the MPs of the labor movement in your countries to vote against the Greek bailout program as well as vote against any other austerity measures!*

We call upon all workers and poor in Greece and internationally to fight together with us for these demands and to join us in building a new revolutionary world party of the workers and the poor, a Fifth Workers' International!

International Secretariat of the RCIT ■



Third Euro-Mediterranean Conference, Athens, Greece, 18-20 July 2015

## Socialists Discuss Perspectives of Class Struggle in Greece

Report on the Third Euro-Mediterranean Conference, Athens, Greece, 18-20.7.2015

*Editorial Board, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 24 July 2015*

On 18-20 July, the 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Conference took place in Greece's capital, Athens. This conference was organized by the Balkan Socialist Center, "*Christian Rakovsky*," and the *RedMed* network. *RedMed* is a web site run by three political organizations affiliated to the *Coordination for the Refoundation of the Fourth International* (CRFI): the *Ergatiko Epanastatiko Komma* (EEK-Workers Revolutionary Party) of Greece, the *Devrimci İşçi Partisi* (DIP-Revolutionary Workers' Party) of Turkey, and the *Partito Comunista dei Lavoratori* (PCL) of Italy. The biggest section of the CRFI is the *Partido Obrero* in Argentina.

The conference could hardly have taken place at a better time and location. Two weeks after the historic vote on 5 July for *OXI* on the referendum of the EU-Troika ultimatum, the conference was breathing the air of a pre-revolutionary situation in Greece. This was reflected in various enthusiastic speeches.

The event was attended by about 100 persons. In addition to the organizing parties, there were also delegations and representatives from socialist organizations in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Russia, Ukraine (via Skype), Finland, Denmark, and Poland. In addition, left-wing intellectuals like Hillel Ticktin (editor of the Marxist Journal *Critique*), Latief Parker (A South Africa member of the Editorial Board of *Critique*), and Alex Steiner from the US (editor of the blog *permanentrevolution.org*) addressed the meeting. There were also representatives from the PSTU, the main section of the Morenoite LIT-FI.

In addition, the conference was addressed by guest speakers from the NAR and OKDE Spartakos which are both part of the Greek left-wing coalition *Antarsya*.

The RCIT was represented by its International Secretary, Michael Pröbsting, who spoke several times at the conference.

The conference listened to numerous interesting reports about the condition of class struggle in the respective countries. Of particular interest were the speeches from Savas Michael Matsas (EEK) on the situation in Greece after the *OXI*-Referendum and of Sungur Savran (DIP) about the perspectives of the class struggle in the Middle East.

Naturally the numerous contributions reflected different points of view. For example the contributions from Russian and Ukrainian speakers often expressed softness in their opposition to Russian imperialism, a failure which is related to the devastating tradition of Stalinism in those countries. Likewise, we noted important political differences with the comrades from the *RedMed Network*. While the RCIT characterizes Russia and China as imperialist powers, these comrades do not. Furthermore, while the RCIT continues to support the Syrian Revolution despite its petty-bourgeois Islamist leadership, the *RedMed* comrades have stopped their support and take now a defeatist position.

However, irrespective of these differences, we saw the conference as an important and useful event which brought together socialists from various countries in order to discuss perspectives and program for the coming class struggle. Such a place for constructive and serious discussions is very much needed in periods like the present one containing as it does so much potential for revolutionary developments together with the dangers of counter-revolution. ■



*Third Euro-Mediterranean Conference, Athens, Greece, 18-20 July 2015*



# Britain: Corbyn Victorious in Labour Leadership Election

By Laurence Humphries, RCIT Britain, 12 September 2015

Jeremy Corbyn has won the Labour leadership election by a big majority. The figures are:

Corbyn: 59.5%  
Burnham: 19%  
Cooper: 17%  
Kendall: 4.5%.

His victory represents a clear message from the vanguard of the working class and the youth that there has to be a change to the pro-austerity and pro-capitalist direction that the Labour leadership under Miliband and Harman have been leading the party.

The RCIT in Britain gave critical support to Corbyn. We sharply criticised his reformist outlook and his refusal to break with the Blairite wing in the Labour Party. However, we also pointed out that Corbyn, who was by far the most left-wing candidate in the contest, reflected in many ways "the hopes of the progressive sector of the working class and wants to fundamentally steer the Labour party in a leftward direction." (1)

Corbyn was able to attract such support because he raised a number of progressive demands like:

- \* Against imperialist wars in Iraq, Syria and the Yemen.
- \* Partial Nationalisation of Rail and other enterprises
- \* Clear opposition to the Tories welfare reform proposals
- \* The restoration of Clause 4 in the Labour party.

Corbyn clearly wants to work with the Blairite section of the party now that he has been elected leader and chooses to ignore their pro-capitalist views. He is very close to the trade union bureaucracy and has a neo-Keynesian outlook. In Bulletin no 4 August 2015 we already drew attention to his economic approach which he stated in his *The Economy in 2020* platform. "Labour must create a balanced economy that ensures workers and government share fairly in the wealth creation process". (2)

The centrists have either supported him uncritically or ignored his campaign. *Socialist Appeal*, the section of the *International Marxist Tendency*, has given totally uncritical support to Corbyn. "A political earthquake is shaking the Labour Party to its foundations. An unprecedented 610,000 are voting to elect a new leader. The ramifications are being felt everywhere. The mood of anger and bitterness that has built up in society was desperately searching for an outlet. In Scotland, it found the outlet in the Referendum and the rise of the SNP. Now Corbyn's campaign for Labour leader has acted like a lightning rod for this discontent. It appears to be unstoppable, with Jeremy Corbyn on course to win the Labour leadership contest". [2]

The *Socialist Party* (CWI) has supported Corbyn but see their own organisation TUSC together with Corbyn supporters as the embryo of a new workers party. "If Jeremy Corbyn now goes on to win on 12 September – and mobilises the necessary mass campaign required to defeat the still dominant organised capitalist forces within the Labour Party – it will be a giant step towards creating a new workers' party out of the dying embers of New Labour. The same opportunity to build a new party exists, of course, if he loses, but outside the constraints of the sterilised Labour Party structures". (4).

The RCIT Britain advocates a united front policy where revolutionaries must work to establish committees of action amongst the supporters of Corbyn. We concretely propose that at the forthcoming *Labour Representative Committee* conference to be held in November that a national conference be organised to establish committees of action amongst the supporters of Jeremy Corbyn with

the following demands.

\* Stop the Tory's racist immigration policies! Open borders for refugees! For equality of black, Asian and migrant peoples! For all migrants' full citizenship rights, for the right to use their native tongue, and the right to all their cultural rights including the right of dress!

\* For the nationalization of rail and electricity under workers control! Nationalise all banks and corporations under workers' control without paying compensation! Reinstatement of all public utilities that have privatised by both Labour and Tory led Governments!

\* Cancel all household debts! Occupy empty housing and oppose evictions if carried out by local authorities!

\* Repeal the Anti-Trade Union Laws! Legalise the right to strike and withdraw your labour!

\* Oppose all imperialist wars! British army and air force – out of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Northern Ireland! Support the resistance!

\* For a general strike to bring down this hated Tory government!

\* For a workers' government based upon councils of action and for an armed workers militia!

\* For a workers republic in Britain! For a United Socialist States of Europe!

In order to enhance the struggle for such a perspective it is crucial to build a revolutionary party in Britain as part of revolutionary workers international. The RCIT Britain is dedicated to this task. If you agree with our perspective, join us!

## Footnotes

(1) Laurence Humphries: British Labour Party Leadership Contest: Critical Support for Jeremy Corbyn! RCIT Britain, 17. August 2015, <http://www.thecomunists.net/worldwide/europe/uk-corbyn-campaign/>

(2) Jeremy Corbyn : *The Economy in 2020*, p. 2

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## UK Labour Party: Critical Support for Jeremy Corbyn!

By Laurence Humphries, RCIT Britain, 17. August 2015

The Labour Party leadership contest – which became necessary after Ed Miliband's resignation following the ignominious defeat of the Labour Party at the last General Election – has four declared candidates. These four candidates are:

\* Yvette Cooper: wife of Ed Balls, a former cabinet minister in the Gordon Brown Government

\* Andy Burnham: another former cabinet minister in the Gordon Brown Government

\* Liz Kendall: a Shadow Minister and the favoured Blairite candidate

\* Jeremy Corbyn MP for Islington North and the socialist candidate from the left of the party.

The Labour party, supported by Tony Blair, changed the rules for party members voting in a leadership election. Instead of the block votes of the trade unions they introduced one vote per member. And under Ed Miliband's leadership, they introduced two other criteria for membership 1) *Members* 2) *Registered supporters* 3) *Affiliated Supporters*. For just £3 a registered supporter can vote in this leadership election. The election will be from the 14<sup>th</sup> August -10<sup>th</sup> September with a special conference on the 12<sup>th</sup> September to announce the result.

There has been a howl of protest from right-wingers suggesting that members of various centrist groups like the SWP, the SPEW and Socialist Appeal could sign up as registered supporters and vote in the Election. It appears that the right wing in the party 'have all been hung by their own petard'.

*"The frontrunner in the Labour leadership election, Jeremy Corbyn, has said he only wants the support of "genuine Labour supporters" as he sought to dismiss calls for the party to shelve the contest over fears of an "infiltration" by hard-left activists. John Mann, the Labour MP for Bassetlaw, has written to the party's interim leader, Harriet Harman, to call for the election to be suspended until proper checks can be carried out on the tens of thousands of new members who have joined Labour since its election defeat in May. Mann told Harman: "[The election] should be halted. It is becoming a farce with longstanding members ... in danger of getting trumped by people who have opposed the Labour party and want to break it up – some of it is the Militant Tendency-types coming back in." (1)*

Jeremy Corbyn is a noted left-winger, active in the Socialist Campaign group of MP's as well as being a leader in the *Labour Representation Committee*, another left wing organisation. Corbyn has caught the imagination of workers and youth who see in Corbyn an expression of change of politics in the Labour Party. He is chair of *Stop the War campaign* and has repeatedly voted in parliament against the Iraq war and the bombing of Syria. He was the only leadership contender who attended the recent anti-austerity march organised by the *People's Assembly*. He is known to be campaigning in the election as an anti-austerity candidate. He was one of 48 MP's who recently voted against the Conservative governments *Welfare Reform Proposals*. All the other candidates abstained against this

ferocious attack on workers living standards which include cuts in tax credits (the amount that government adds on to help with workers with low wages); Housing benefit is to be cut to workers and their families with some exceptions. Universal credit, another Welfare reform, is paid to people of working age but failure to attend interviews or contact the job centre can lead to benefit sanctions which are been rigidly adhered to. The latest report is that over 1 million claimants have been sanctioned. The three other candidates – Cooper, Burnham and Kendall – all espouse right-wing views in the party and have grown closer and closer to the capitalist state. Blair has been rolled out to defend their cosy relationship with capitalism.

Jeremy Corbyn's campaign promises include opposition to imperialist wars including wars in Iraq and Syria, opposition to the *Anti-Union Laws*, the return of *Clause 4* to the Labour Party and nationalisation of major utilities like the Railways. Jeremy Corbyn has risked provoking a damaging row at the heart of the Blairite Labour Party by pledging to restore Clause Four if he is elected leader next month. Unsurprisingly, Corbyn has provoked a storm of protest by right wing Blairites in the Labour Party.

*"Jeremy Corbyn has risked provoking a damaging row at the heart of the Labour Party by pledging to restore Clause Four if he is elected leader next month. In an interview with The Independent on Sunday, the man who has set alight the leadership race says the party needs to reinstate a clear commitment to public ownership of industry in a move which would reverse one of the defining moments in Labour's history. (...) Mr Corbyn said: "I think we should talk about what the objectives of the party are, whether that's restoring Clause Four as it was originally written or it's a different one. But we shouldn't shy away from public participation, public investment in industry and public control of the railways."*

Tony Blair described it as the "defining moment in the history of my party" when he successfully scrapped Clause Four in 1995, marking an end to nearly a century of Labour's commitment to socialism. The old Clause Four stated that the party was committed to "common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange", but it was more than just a line of text. Mr Blair, who had been leader for less than a year, wanted to free Labour to embrace the market, and took on his party and the unions. At a special conference in April 1995, Mr Blair successfully won the party's agreement to sign up to a new Clause Four, which replaced the old wording with a commitment to a "dynamic economy, serving the public interest" with "a thriving private sector and high quality public services". (2)

Corbyn in many ways reflects the hopes of the progressive sector of the working class and wants to fundamentally steer the Labour party in a leftward direction. He has been attracting huge numbers of workers and youth to his campaign meetings. His meetings are overcrowded with enthusiastic workers and youth who want to see an end to austerity.

Many of the centrist groups have embraced his campaign.

*The Socialist*, the paper of the Socialist Party, writes:

*"Jeremy Corbyn's nomination for Labour leadership has transformed the contest. In contrast to the three varieties of Blairite 'austerity lite' on offer, he has captured a mood. Large numbers of people young and old, many from outside the party, have been inspired by the anti-austerity message. This parallels the anti-austerity mood that developed around the Scottish independence referendum and the surge for the Scottish National Party, as well as the million people who voted Green in the general election".*(3) .

Workers Power emphasises the mass character of the campaign and its progressive potential. It recommends that revolutionaries should join the Labour party as registered members.

*"Every left winger, every socialist individual or group, should throw themselves into the Corbyn campaign and prepare to fight the Tories in the streets and their stooges in the Labour Party."* (4)

Naturally, revolutionaries must not stand aside of the Corbyn campaign but intervene and participate in it. Only sectarians can ignore the fact that this movement represents an important step in the politicisation of tens of thousands of young activists. It is important to build rank and file committees which organize new layers of activists and which will remain active beyond the electoral campaign in order to participate actively in the class struggle.

However, at the same time revolutionaries have to point out the left reformist character of Corbyn and his campaign. Corbyn has no perspective beyond becoming leader, transforming Labour into a left-reformist party without splitting with the right-wing and hopefully winning the 2020 General election.

It is important to explain that while Corbyn stands for partial nationalisation (Rail and Electricity), his economic

programme which he proposes is nothing more than a Neo-Keynesian document which attempts to tinker with capitalism in a reformist way.

In his document *"The Economy in 2020"* it is plain that like all reformists he favours a mixed economy with trade union bureaucrats working together with the capitalists. *"Labour must create a balanced economy that ensures workers and government share fairly in the wealth creation process"*. (5) In another statement of his document he proposes the equality of taxation. *"So to deliver rising living standards and decent jobs for the majority - which has got to be the focus of any Labour programme - we need a strategy for faster, more sustainable growth, as well as policies - including on taxation - to make sure that growth is more fairly distributed."* (6)

This is the tenet of Corbyn's economic policy which is a total reformist document. The RCIT Britain rejects this formula as unattainable and a pipe dream. Capitalism is a system driven by crises and anarchic production. As Marxists we reject the idea that capitalism can be in anyway reformed or be made social just. As we have shown elsewhere, it has become increasingly unequal in the past decades around the world. (7) It can not be otherwise since in a period of decline of the capitalist system, the capitalists can increase their profits only at the costs of wages and welfare benefits. Hence capitalism has to be overthrown and replaced with a planned socialist economy.

Likewise, Corbyn wants to avoid a split with the party bureaucracy. Authentic socialists have to warn the new generation of activists that Corbyn will do whatever he can to avoid such a split. But it is in the interest of the working class to drive out the Blairite right-wing and the bureaucracy from the Labour Party. Revolutionaries have to warn that Corbyn will be prepared to make concessions

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to the bureaucracy in order to avoid such a split.

Many of the centrists believe that the Labour party can be reformed or changed. However, the right wing and the bureaucracy in the Labour party will ensure that it remains a bourgeois workers party (i.e. a party which is based upon the working class but controlled by a bureaucratic caste inextricably linked with the capitalist state). They will do everything in their tracks to stop Corbyn either through a split in the party or encouraging members to leave as the Social Democratic party did in the early 1980s (they are now part of the Liberal democrats).

Corbyn's weakness is that he has nothing to offer at the moment, all his policies are geared towards a Labour victory in 2020. Leaving aside that such victory is not a certainty, it also means that workers and youth have to face another 5 years of austerity without a perspective to fight back NOW.

It is the task of socialists to fight side by side with the tens of thousands of young activists in the Corbyn campaign. The RCIT Britain support this campaign and calls for a critical vote for Corbyn. However, at the same time we warn that Corbyn's program is not only left-reformist but that also his strategy lacks a realistic perspective to fight back against austerity now. It is not orientated towards the organization of mass mobilizations, mass strikes and occupations in order to bring down the Tory government. Corbyn's strategy is rather orientated to symbolic one-time protests now and winning the election in five years. Finally, Corbyn is not prepared to break with the right wing in Labour (while the right wing itself is likely to break with Corbyn).

For all these reasons revolutionaries have to warn that Corbyn will betray the movement and their hopes of his supporters. This must not lead to any sectarian abstention from the campaign. Revolutionaries have to apply the united front tactic and give critical support to it. We call for the formation of committees of action out of the tens of thousands of supporters of the Corbyn campaign in order to put pressure on Corbyn to implement his promises. Such committees could also continue the struggle independently if Corbyn retreats.

The RCIT calls for:

*\* Critically support Jeremy Corbyn in the Labour Party Leadership campaign!*

*\* Formation of committees of action out of the supporters of the Corbyn campaign!*

*\* Stop the Tory's racist immigration policies! For equality of black, Asian and migrant peoples! For all migrants' full citizenship rights, for the right to use their native tongue, and the right to all their cultural rights including the right of dress!*

*\* For the nationalization of rail and electrify under workers control! Nationalise all banks and corporations under workers' control without paying compensation! Reinstatate all public utilities that have privatised by both Labour and Tory led Governments!*

*\* Cancel all household debts! Occupy empty housing and oppose evictions if carried out by local authorities!*

*\* Repeal the Anti-Trade Union Laws! Legalise the right to strike and withdraw your labour!*

*\* Oppose all imperialist wars! British army and air force – out of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Northern Ireland! Support the resistance!*

*\* For a general strike to bring down this hated Tory government!*

*\* For a workers' government based upon councils of action and for an armed workers militia!*

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In order to enhance the struggle for such a perspective it is crucial to build a revolutionary party in Britain as part of revolutionary workers international. The RCIT Britain is dedicated to this task. If you agree with our perspective, join us!

#### Footnotes

(1) Patrick Wintour: Jeremy Corbyn: I only want genuine Labour supporters to vote for me, The Guardian, 26 July 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/jul/26/jeremy-corbyn-genuine-labour-supporters-leadership-election>

(2) Jane Merrick: Jeremy Corbyn to 'bring back Clause IV': Contender pledges to bury New Labour with commitment to public ownership of industry, The Independent, 09 August 2015, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/jeremy-corbyn-to-bring-back-clause-four-contender-pledges-to-bury-new-labour-with-commitment-to-public-ownership-of-industry-10446982.html>

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(5) Jeremy Corbyn: The Economy in 2020, p. 2

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(7) See e.g. Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South, Vienna 2013, chapter 5, <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/great-robbery-of-south-online/download-chapters-1/chapter5/> ■

# LIBERATION

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## RCIT Austria to Run in Vienna's Municipal Elections

*Report from the Austrian Section of the RCIT, 5 September 2015*

The Austrian Section of the RCIT (Revolutionary Communist Organization LIBERATION, RKO BEFREIUNG) will be running in the upcoming municipal elections of Vienna, Austria's capital city, to be held on 11 October. We will be running in Favoriten, the city's largest district with a population of 187,000 people (making it nearly as big as Linz, the third most populous city of Austria).

Favoriten is a traditional working class district. Its composition (officially, 42% of the population are migrants) reflects the multi-national character of the mass of the working class in Vienna.

In order to be allowed to run in the elections, our comrades had to collect a number of signatures of people who reside in this district. Naturally, there were a number of obstacles. Many migrants do not have Austrian citizenship and hence are not allowed to vote (the disenfranchised constitute nearly 1/3 of the entire population over the age of 16 in Favoriten!). In addition many persons, particularly migrants, fear going to municipal offices and signing in front of bureaucrats (which they must do in order for their signature to be recognized). Nevertheless the comrades of the Austrian RCIT-Section succeeded in collecting a sufficient number of signatures. We just slightly missed getting the necessary number of signatures for Floridsdorf too, the third largest district of the city with a population of 149,000.

The name of our list will be "RKO BEFREIUNG – Equal Rights for Muslims." As we have reported in the past, Islamophobia has become a central issue in Austrian domestic politics. Anti-Muslim hatred is spread by right-wing populists (the Austrian FPÖ led by Strache, which is currently the leading party in the national polls) as well by fascists. While the latter have been a relatively small force until now, they recently tried to go more on the offensive, as we witnessed in the racist PEGIDA demonstration which was held on 2 February; however at that time they were seriously outnumbered by a massive counter-demonstration in which we played a key role. However Islamophobia is also exploited by the social-democratic/conservative coalition government which pushed through the so-called "Islam Law" in the spring of 2015, a law which discriminates against Islam relative to other religions.

The Austrian section of the RCIT has a long history of campaigning for migrant rights and solidarity with the Palestinian liberation struggle and the Arab Revolution. (See the numerous reports on our website and various videos on our YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/RevolutionCommunism>). As a result of our well-known and appreciated record, we were able to gain the support of militants and other groups among the migrant population and to further advance our good relations with these communities. The positive extent of these relations was reflected, for example, by the fact that, in the mass counter-demonstration against PEGIDA on 2 February, our comrade Michael Pröbsting was nominated by the Muslim migrant organizations to be one of their two speakers (See <http://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/>

[austria-mass-demo-against-islamophobia/](http://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/austria-mass-demo-against-islamophobia/)).

Our campaign will be based around three main issues.

1) *Equal rights for migrants! Equal rights for Muslims! Open borders for refugees! Equality for migrants in all legal matters! For the right of migrants to use their native language in Vienna's public educational institutions and in the city's administrative offices! Equal pay for equal work! Down with the racist "Islam Law"!*

2) *Solidarity with the Arab Revolution! US & EU: Out of the Middle East and North Africa! Freedom for Palestine! Solidarity with Gaza! No to Apartheid Israel! Victory for the Syrian revolution! Solidarity with the resistance against the military dictatorship in Egypt! No to war against Yemen! Freedom for Chechnya – No to the Russian occupation!*

3) *Wealth is theft! Expropriate the superrich! Place the banks and wealth in the hands of the working people! Cancel debts! End unemployment – For a program of public works under the control of the workers! Housing for all – Expropriate the housing speculators! For a minimum monthly wage of 1,700 Euro!*

Naturally, as communists we have no illusions in the significance of bourgeois "democratic" elections, let alone municipal elections. The main purpose of our running in the electoral campaign is to spread our ideas among the working class migrant communities, to win new supporters for our struggle among them, and to advance and deepen our relations with these communities.

The past weeks of electoral campaigning have already witnessed a number of interesting developments. Migrants have traditionally voted in their majority for the social-democrat party (SPÖ) – social democrats having controlled Vienna's municipal government since 1918 (except for the years of fascist rule, 1934-45). However, given the support SPÖ gave to the reactionary Islam Law and the entire racist policy of the Austrian state, more and more migrants are now turning away from the reformists. According to recent opinion polls, the SPÖ is about to lose a large chunk of their electoral support (dropping from 44% to 35%).

Consistent with this development has been the formation of a new migrant list called "Together for Vienna." The initiators of this list are a group of Turkish Muslim forces. They invited the RKO BEFREIUNG to participate in their list. They also invited us to a meeting of 65-70 Muslim community leaders in which comrade Pröbsting was asked to deliver a speech (see <http://www.rkob.net/wer-wir-sind-1/rkob-aktiv-bei/vereinstreffen-2015>). While the leaders of "Together for Vienna" initially agreed to our conditions and even offered us a prominent place in their list of candidates, the negotiations ultimately broke down because a significant section in this heterogeneous list rejected our demand for freedom of propaganda for our candidates. In addition, this list failed to integrate a number of active migrant organizations. Thus, we decided to run on our own.

We look forward to an intense period of electoral campaigning and hope that this will afford us numerous opportunities to share our ideas with working class and migrant people! ■

## Palestine: Occupied East Jerusalem in Revolt

By Yossi Schwartz, *Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine)*, 20.9.2015

The Jewish Bible tells us that the Philistines oppressed the Israelites and that the Philistines had a giant warrior name Goliath who challenged the Israelites to fight him. As Goliath moved in for the kill, the young shepherd lad, David, reached into his bag and slung one of his stones at Goliath's head. Finding a hole in the armor, the stone sank into the giant's forehead and he collapsed face down on the ground. David then took Goliath's sword, killed him and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. So the Israelites pursued, chasing and killing them and plundering their camp.

We can imagine the reaction of the Philistine kings to this heroic action of David. They issued order that any Israelite boy who holds a stone must be killed.

In the last few days Palestinians and the Israeli army and police have clashed in many neighborhoods in Jerusalem. The Palestinians throwing stones while the Israeli army and police, the Goliath in this situation, have been using live ammunition. In addition, the Israeli government, in reaction to the Palestinian youth throwing stones, is considering loosening its rules of engagement to give soldiers greater leeway in firing at Palestinian stone-throwers. In other words, the Israeli armed forces are allowed to kill even with more ease than before.

It is no coincidence that these clashes are taking place during the Jewish high holidays, as this is the time that right wing Zionists, protected by the police and the army, regularly provoke the Palestinians in the Al-Aqsa Mosques.

### The Provocation

Reports in Western mass media create the impression that, out of the blue, Palestinians are throwing stones and are killing innocent people.

*"A Jewish man died early Monday morning after attackers pelted the road he was driving on with rocks as he was returning home from a dinner celebrating Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, the Israeli authorities said. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called an emergency meeting to discuss rock-throwing, mostly by Palestinian youths. The man was identified in local news reports as Alexander Levlovich, 64. His death was reported as the police and Palestinian youths clashed for a second day at a contested holy site in Jerusalem, amid tensions over increased visits by Jews for Rosh Hashana. The two-day holiday began at sundown on Sunday." (1)*

The current acts of resistance to the Israeli forces began on September 13 when Israeli armed forces assaulted two Al-Aqsa Mosque guards at the holy site in occupied East Jerusalem. According to the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Endowment the guards, Mowafak al-Hamami, 50, and Hamza Nimer, 35, were assaulted by Israeli forces who were escorting a group of Israeli right-wingers who entered the site despite the opposition of the guards. Both guards were taken to Makassed hospital for medical treatment. Witnesses said that an Israeli pushed a Palestinian woman

during the tour and swore at her. Around 25 Israeli right-wingers entered the site via the Mugrahbi Gate, while 60 Palestinians were denied access to the compound. At least 52 of those denied were Palestinian women known as the *Murabitat* who have been blacklisted by Israel from entering the site. Israeli right-wing extremist Yehuda Glick participated in the tour, as Palestinians shouted "*Allah Akbar*" (God is Great) at the group. Tensions have soared across East Jerusalem in the wake of three days of violent clashes at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, the third holiest site in Islam. Palestinians fear Israel is seeking to change rules governing the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, with far-right Jewish groups pushing for more access to the compound and even efforts by fringe organizations to erect a new temple instead of Al Aqsa. The same organizations that on Jerusalem day last May march in the Arab old city chanting "*Death to Arabs*" and "*We will build the third temple.*"

*"The PLO has accused Israel of provoking the entire Muslim world in its actions at the compound. "Israel is playing with fire," senior PLO official Hanan Ashrawi said Monday, warning that Israeli authorities were forcibly securing control over the site "in preparation for the total annexation and transformation of Al-Haram Al-Sharif." (2)*

The Ma'an News Agency has also reported:

*"Israeli forces entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound's southern mosque on Tuesday sparking the third straight day of violent clashes at the third holiest site in Islam. Dozens of Palestinians were injured in the clashes, during which Israeli forces fired stun grenades, tear gas canisters, and rubber-coated steel bullets at Palestinian worshipers. The Palestinian Red Crescent's Jerusalem director, Amin Abu Ghazala, told Ma'an that 36 Palestinians had received treatment. He said that some of the Palestinians had suffered wounds and bruises, while others had suffered excessive tear gas inhalation. At least two were hospitalized. The director of Al-Aqsa religious school for boys, Nadir al-Afghani, said that a 14-year-old boy was hit in his head by a rubber-coated steel bullet and had received 10 stitches. Israeli police said five officers were lightly injured." (3)*

According to Laurent Lozano, a reporter with the AFP:

*"Palestinians and Israeli security forces clashed in Jerusalem's flashpoint Al-Aqsa mosque compound and the surrounding Old City for a third straight day on Tuesday despite international calls for calm. Young demonstrators gathered around the mosque threw stones at police who had entered the compound in large numbers and responded with stun grenades. Police said they cleared debris from the entrance of the mosque and closed the door on those inside who had been throwing stones, fireworks and other objects at security forces. The Jordanian-run Waqf organisation which administers the site said that police entered deep inside the mosque and caused damage. Amman said Israel's actions amount to "aggression" against Arab and Muslim nations, and said it was examining legal and diplomatic means to protect religious sites in the Holy City. Jordan has custodianship rights over Muslim holy places in Jerusalem under its 1994 peace treaty with Israel. The new flare-up came despite calls for restraint from the United Nations, United States and*

European Union. UN special envoy for the Middle East peace process Nickolay Mladenov warned that "provocations" at the site could lead to unrest elsewhere in the Middle East." (4)

A senior Israeli official in Jerusalem said that Israel told Jordan it has no intention of making any change to the status quo at the holy site, and said that the Palestinians are spreading lies on this issue. (5)

Is this so, or do the Palestinians have a reason to believe that the Israeli government supports the far right plans to destroy the Mosques and build a Jewish temple instead?

### Report by Ir Amim

A 2013 report by the Israeli research organization Ir Amim noted:

*"Over the past several hundred years, a status quo has been maintained according to which the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif area (henceforth: the Mount) is an area reserved for Muslim prayer and the Western Wall is a prayer area reserved for Jews. Over the last decade, the status of these areas has gradually shifted, driven by a revival of activity by Jews determined to strengthen the status of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif complex as a Jewish religious center and to marginalize the claims of Muslims to the Mount. In the past year alone, hundreds of national religious Jewish pilgrims have ascended the Mount, including groups of rabbis, women, members of Knesset and recently, soldiers in uniform...."*

*The movements' growing momentum and dangerous provocations to change the status quo are not receiving adequate attention, nor is the disturbing connection between these movements and official Israeli institutions.... In the last three decades, there has been a considerable increase in movement-sponsored public education activities and dozens of organizations have arisen with the goal of raising public awareness about the importance of the Temple Mount and its reconstruction. These groups are backed by an increasing number of public figures, Knesset members and state institutions. The current situation at the holy sites in Jerusalem is rooted in the status quo established during the Ottoman era.*

*The overriding principle guiding worship arrangements over the past 500 years is the separation of worship sites: Muslims conduct their religious worship in Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and Jews worship at the Western Wall. This principle was revalidated after Israel occupied the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif in 1967. Ten days after the occupation, on June 17, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and the members of the Higher Muslim Council agreed that IDF soldiers would vacate the Mount area and deploy around it, allowing internal supervision to remain under the purview of the Waqf and designating authority for external security to Israel's security forces. The interdiction against Jewish prayer on the Mount was accepted by a ministerial committee for the protection of holy sites and was tacitly indicated by halting Rabbi Goren's activity on the Mount and ordering security forces to evict Jewish worshippers attempting to pray on the Mount. This arrangement satisfied both the Waqf and the Orthodox Rabbinate.*

*According to Ami Ayalon, former head of the Israel Security Agency (a.k.a. the "Shabak"): "The very fact that Jews who want to change the status quo, whether it is Feiglin or anyone else, ascend the Mount and pray, is a recipe for explosion. We ) Shabak( have said that even though the status quo is problematic, stability is very valuable and anyone who wishes to change the status quo must do so very patiently, in the broadest circles.*

*Such a process must include the kings of Morocco, Jordan and Saudi Arabia as well as the president of Egypt. The second circle includes the leadership of the Palestinian Authority. [...] All of this must be part of a broader political process. Only a combined treatment by all of these parties might bring about a change in the status quo on the Mount."(Ami Ayalon, interview with Yizhar Be'er and Yehudit Oppenheimer, December 13, 2012)*

*The very ascent to the Temple Mount by Jews has been forbidden by various halachic [Jewish religious law) rulings. The interdiction is rooted in the laws of purity and impurity, based on the idea that all Jews today are polluted by the "impurity of death" through primary or secondary contact with the dead. According to halachic tradition, one must not enter the area of the Temple without being cleansed from the impurity of death. This purification ritual is no longer possible given the requirement of a special rite involving the ashes of a redheifer, which cannot be found today. In recent years we have witnessed a change in the definitions of the prohibition by religious Zionist rabbis, who call on Jews to ascend certain areas of the Mount "in a state of purity" and even lead such ascents themselves. They rationalize these actions based on the belief that they have the ability to identify where the boundaries of the ancient Temple ran and to direct their students accordingly. Among these rabbis are many of the leaders of the historic Gush Emunim, rabbis of the "settlement enterprise." (6)*

An Israeli reporter, Amira Hass, has written that the Hebrew website *Temple Mount News* reported last week that Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel, who traditionally visits the mount every Rosh Hashanah, was there among the many Jewish visitors:

*"They ascended the holy site after a heavy police presence used force to keep away young Palestinians who intended to stop the visit by throwing stones and firecrackers. The clashes repeated on Monday and Tuesday. Palestinian sources report that at least 40 Palestinians were injured, among them many journalists. They also report extensive damage, including broken doors in the mosque. Ariel, the website reported, blessed the Jewish people with the priestly blessing. This is the same Ariel who in July met with the parliamentary team of Students For The Temple Mount, and promised that he would take action to end "discrimination against Jews on Temple Mount." He also promised the students he would set up a meeting with Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan to examine the "behavior of Israel Police toward Jews visiting Temple Mount." And here we are, this week Erdan praised the police for doing a firm job on Sunday and said the current arrangements on the mount have to be reviewed. Ariel, as housing minister, called two years ago for rebuilding "the real Holy Temple on Temple Mount." He apparently has not repeated the statement publicly since then, but it is not the passing remark of an Internet comment-writer. Between the "visits" and the recurring break-ins of armed Israelis into the holy Muslim site, his statement is a scary indication. The attempt to present visits by Jews to the site as affirmative action motivated by the principle of equality is playing dumb and dangerous in its pretension Over the past few days, amid clashes at the Temple Mount, Jordan's King Abdullah II made strong declarations against Israel, and even sent a warning over the future of Israel-Jordan ties. "Any more provocations in Jerusalem, will affect the relationship between Jordan and Israel; and Jordan will have no choice, but to take action, unfortunately," he said. Following escalation on the Temple Mount last year, Jordan returned its ambassador in Israel for consultations in Amman, and only sent him back to Tel Aviv after many months." (7)*

### More Repression

Meanwhile, on September 15, Israeli forces shot and injured a Palestinian taking part in a demonstration in the northern West Bank to protest Israeli actions at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. Another five Palestinians suffered excessive tear gas inhalation during the protest, which marched to an Israeli checkpoint known as Sani Oz to the west of Tulkarem. Medical sources told Ma'an that the Palestinian was in moderate condition after he was shot in the thigh. (8)

On September 16, Palestinian youths clashed with Israeli forces across occupied East Jerusalem on Tuesday night following three days of violent clashes at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. The clashes erupted in the East Jerusalem neighborhoods and villages of al-'Issawiya, al-Tur, Shu'afat refugee camp, Silwan, Sur Bahir, and al-Sowwana. Muhammad Abu al-Hummus, a local committee member in al-'Issawiya, told Ma'an that clashes broke out in 'Issawiya after Israeli forces chased and shot at two Palestinians, injuring one and detaining the other. Abu al-Hummus said that during the ensuing clashes, Israeli forces raided the village and sprayed foul-smelling skunk water on the streets and on one of the village's mosques. He said that a 13-year-old girl, Saly Yousif Muhessien, who was in a nearby park, was injured when she was hit by a rubber-coated steel bullet in her neck.

In Shu'afat refugee camp clashes broke out there after Palestinian youths threw Molotov cocktails at a nearby Israeli checkpoint, setting an Israeli control tower on fire. Israeli forces responded by firing tear gas canisters and rubber-coated steel bullets. Israeli forces also raided al-Tur neighborhood, reportedly detaining a child there, identified as Muath Sayyad.

In al-Sowwana neighborhood, clashes broke out after Palestinian youths shot fireworks at the Israeli settlement of Beit Orot, built on the neighborhood's land. Clashes also erupted in the southern village of Sur Bahir when Israeli settlers marched to the village entrance, raising Israeli flags and chanting about the death of an Israeli driver, who police say may have lost control of his car after a stone was thrown at it.

The Wadi Hilweh information center said that clashes also erupted in the Ras al-Amoud neighborhood of Silwan, just south of the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. The information center said that Israeli forces fired tear gas canisters and sprayed skunk water through the neighborhood's streets. (9)

On September 15, occupation forces arrested a 14-year old Mu'nes Emad Idkeidek from in front of his house in the neighborhood of Ras Al-Amoud in Silwan. The child's father explained to Wadi Hilweh Information Center that the occupation forces arrested his son while he was in front of his house in Ras Al-Amoud in Silwan. The forces fired three rubber[-coated steel] bullets towards him and despite being injured and falling on the ground, nearly 8 soldiers assaulted and severely beat him under the pretext of throwing stones. The child's father added that the forces arrested his son while barefoot and verbal altercations broke out between the forces and the family members. The father also added that the forces refused to talk to him about his son's medical condition and the type of injury he suffered and instead handcuffed the boy despite the fact

that he was bleeding. He pointed out that his brother tried to follow the forces to check on Mu'nes but the forces fired a rubber bullet towards him and injured him in the hand. (10)

On September 17, Israeli forces detained four Palestinian children and two young men from different neighborhoods of occupied East Jerusalem, after ransacking their homes overnight. Addameer human rights lawyer Muhammad Mahmoud said Israeli forces detained Ramiz Ajlouni, 12, and Muatazz Said, 16, in the Old City of Jerusalem overnight on Wednesday, while local sources told Ma'an Nabil Sidir, 13, was also detained from his home in the Old City. Locals in the East Jerusalem village of Sur Bahir told Ma'an that Israeli forces stormed the village and detained Muhyiddin Najih Ibkerat, 20, Nasser Amirah, 25, and Muatazz Mahmoud Dabash, a Palestinian in his twenties.

On Tuesday night, September 14, Israeli forces also detained eight young men and minors from the neighborhood of Silwan, the village of al-Tur and the Old City — all in occupied East Jerusalem — for alleged stone-throwing. Silwan-based monitor, the Wadi Hilweh Information Center, reported that Israeli forces have detained 34 young men and 26 teenagers in the neighborhood in the past five days alone.

Most of the 60 were detained during clashes in East Jerusalem neighborhoods in protest against Israeli forces storming the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound and attacking worshippers, the monitor group said. (11)

On September 15, Israeli occupation soldiers kidnapped a Palestinian Red Crescent ambulance on Monday that was transporting an injured Jerusalemite and forced it to head towards Hadassah hospital and arrested the injured person. The soldiers stopped the ambulance and pointed their guns towards the ambulance's staff and then got inside the vehicle next to the injured person and forced the driver to head towards Hadassah hospital. The Palestinian Red Crescent Association denounced this Israeli assault which is a clear infringement on the work of the ambulance crews and impeding the humanitarian mission in addition to riding inside the vehicle and forcing them to drive to a specific location. The Israeli aggression is a flagrant violation of the provisions of international humanitarian law in terms of respecting medical staff and providing special protection to them so that they perform their duties safely and without humanitarian threat to their lives and the delivery of ambulatory services and relief to the civilian victims living under occupation . . . Wadi Hilweh Information Center was informed that the detainee is Murad Sarandah who received treatment at Hadassah hospital. The center was also informed that the occupation forces transferred the detainee to Salah Eddin Street police station for interrogation. The village of Esawyeh witnessed violent clashes on Monday in support of Al-Aqsa Mosque due to the recurrent settlers' break-ins. (12)

On September 17, Israeli soldiers invaded the al-Makassed Islamic Charitable Society Hospital, in the at-Tour village in occupied East Jerusalem, and searched several sections. Hospital administration said the soldiers invaded and searched the Children's Ward, nurses and doctors' rooms, the Department of Internal Medicine, and Urgent Care rooms. The soldiers claimed they were searching for young Palestinians who participated in



clashes with the army that took place near the hospital building. The army also searched the all hospital yards, and nearby neighborhoods, and kidnapped two young Palestinian men. (13)

On September 16, occupation forces arrested three children from the Old City of Jerusalem. Wadi Hilweh Information Center's lawyer explained that the occupation forces arrested the 11-year old Mohammad Ismaeel Ahmad Hoshyeh and the 11-year old Mohammad Adel Abdel Hadi Sweiti. The lawyer explained that according to the two children the forces suddenly arrested them while they were in the Old City's markets and took them to Al-Silsileh Gate police station. Hoshyeh was pushed and punched on his face during the arrest and while detained at the police station. It is noteworthy that they were arrested while heading home after leaving school (Omaryeh and Aytam schools). (14)

### Israel is Pushing to a New Intifada

Frustrated by the failure to prevent the US/Iran nuclear agreement the Israeli government is escalating the repression of the Palestinians to galvanize a new wave of chauvinism. This is an old trick of the Zionist state. But it only deepen the growing isolation of the Israeli state and pushes the Palestinians in the direction of a new intifada that may be part of a new wave of the unfinished Arab springs that we may begin witnessing in Lebanon and Iraq

On September 1, Catherine Shakdam, a bourgeois political analyst, writer and commentator for the Middle East who focuses in particular on radical movements published an article in the *Russia Today* where she wrote:

*Revolution's fire is burning bright in the Levant and its winds are infectious. From Lebanon to Iraq and beyond, Bahrain, the Middle East is once more holding its breath before the defiance of its youth. This time around, revolutionaries have their eyes locked on the Establishment.*

*Four years after Tunisia set fire to the barricades by rising against authoritarianism (2011), inspiring an entire generation to denounce nepotism and oligarchic capitalism, Lebanon and Iraq are setting the tone for a second revolutionary wave - only this time, protesters are speaking a very different language and their demands are rooted in secularism, fair political representation and social justice. Unlike the Arab Spring movement, which was very early on hijacked by the "old guard" to serve a very political agenda, the Levant is standing defiantly independent and non-partisan. More importantly and most definitely key, both Lebanese and Iraqis are standing together against any form of religious, social or ethnic divisions.*

*Where Tunisia and Libya's democratic aspirations were crushed before they can blossom, the Levant is not playing any factions' game - neither financed by any particular group, nor sold out to any self-serving agenda....The new Montesquieu and Robespierre of our century are being born in the streets of the Middle East; their resolve made stronger by decades of economic injustice, political misrepresentation and rampant colonialism."* (15)

As a bourgeois writer, Shakdam is unable to see the perspective of the permanent revolution: that for the democratic tasks to be accomplished, the working class led by a revolutionary party must lead to a socialist revolution. However her ability to see a new revolutionary wave is important and she may be very right about it.

*\* Israel hands off Al Aqsa!*

*\* Victory to the Palestinian struggle!*

*\* For a Free, Red Palestine!*

*\* For a new victorious revolutionary wave from Saudi Arabia to Tunisia!*

### Footnotes:

(1) Diaa Hadid: Jewish Man Dies as Rocks Pelt His Car in East Jerusalem, The New York Time, Sept 14 2015, [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/15/world/middleeast/israel-west-bank-violence.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/15/world/middleeast/israel-west-bank-violence.html?_r=0)

(2) Israeli forces assault two Al-Aqsa Mosque guards, Ma'an News Agency, Sept. 16, 2015, <http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=767638>

(3) Israeli forces storm Aqsa Mosque in third day of clashes, Ma'an News Agency, Sept. 15, 2015, <http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=767612>

(4) Laurent Lozano: Clashes rock Jerusalem mosque compound for third day, AFP, September 15, 2015, <http://news.yahoo.com/clashes-rock-jerusalem-mosque-compound-third-day-054615673.html>

(5) Barak Ravid: Israel Seeks to Allay Jordan Concerns Over Temple Mount Violence, Haaretz, Sep 16, 2015, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/premium-1.676247>

(6) Yizhar Be'er: Dangerous Liaison The Dynamics of the Rise of the Temple Movements And Their Implications, Ir Amim & Keshev, March 1, 2013, [http://www.ir-amim.org.il/sites/default/files/Dangerous%20Liaison\\_0.pdf](http://www.ir-amim.org.il/sites/default/files/Dangerous%20Liaison_0.pdf)

(7) Amira Hass: The sanctity of provocation on Temple Mount, Haaretz, Sep 17, 2015, <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/premium-1.676245>

(8) Palestinian shot, injured at Tulkarem protest over Aqsa, Sept. 15, 2015, Ma'an News Agency, <http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=767618>

(9) Clashes erupt across East Jerusalem in wake of Aqsa violence, Ma'an News Agency, Sept. 16, 2015, <http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=767630>

(10) After injuring him with a rubber bullet and assaulting him, the occupation arrests the child Mu'nes Idkeidek, September 15, 2015, <http://silwanic.net/?p=62396>

(11) Israeli forces detain 6 in East Jerusalem, including 4 children, Ma'an News Agency, Sept. 17, 2015, <http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=767659>

(12) The occupation kidnaps a Red Crescent ambulance and arrest an injured person, September 15, 2015, <http://silwanic.net/?p=62392>

(13) Soldiers Invade Al-Makassed Hospital In Jerusalem, September 17, 2015, <http://www.imemc.org/article/73045>

(14) The occupation arrests three children, September 16, 2015, <http://silwanic.net/?p=62501>

(15) Catherine Shakdam: Lebanon leads the way: Forget the Arab Spring - Here comes the real Arab Uprising! Russia Today, September 1 2015, <https://www.rt.com/op-edge/314011-lebanon-iraq-bahrain-protests/> ■



## Israel and the Arms Trade

By Yossi Schwarz, *Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine)*, 2.9.2015

On August 30 we learned that a major industrial union, the *United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers* in the US has voted to endorse the (BDS) movement against Israel. *"The endorsed resolution points to Israel's long history of violating the human rights of the Palestinians, starting with the ethnic cleansing of 750,000 Palestinians in 1947-48 that turned most of Palestine into the State of Israel. It calls for cutting off US aid to Israel, US support for a peace settlement on the basis of self-determination for Palestinians, and the right to return. ...." The resolution also endorses the worldwide BDS— Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions — movement to pressure Israel into ending its apartheid over the Palestinians just as similar tactics helped to end the South African apartheid in the 1980s. UE is now the first U.S. national union to endorse BDS". (1)*

### Weak and Strong Sides

This resolution has both weak and strong sides. Its strong side includes its beginning the history of the oppression of the Palestinians not in 1967 but with the ethnic cleansing of 1947-8. In addition it calls for the right of the return of the Palestinian refugees (and their descendents) who were expelled during the ethnic cleansing. As Israel will never accept the right of return as it contradicts the main Zionist concept of a Jewish state, a peaceful settlement with Israel on this basis is a total illusion. The right of return for Palestinian refugees and a Jewish state are in total contradiction. Those who sincerely support the right of the return just understand that this means a different state than the Israeli apartheid state. One has to decide on which side to stand: on the side of the oppressed Palestinians or on the side of the Zionist oppressors.

The weak side of this resolution is that it calls upon the US, most powerful imperialist state, to act for a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinian on the basis of self-determination for Palestinians and the right to return. As an imperialist state, the US cannot possibly act as a peace broker but only as an imperialist. Naturally, we will not oppose a policy of ending all aid to Israel or sending military aid to the Palestinians, but we have no illusions that this is going to happen in the near future, as both main political parties of the American ruling class still see Israel as an ally in the Middle East. In addition, it is not in the interest of the Palestinian masses to achieve results similar to those which transpired in South Africa with the end of the apartheid regime in 1994, where a socialist revolution was prevented by a bourgeois democratic counter-revolution.

Finally, the resolution in question is weak in its use of the language of human rights rather than the language of working class struggle. This reflects a reformist outlook. The resolution lacks a working class revolutionary perspective which would call for the replacing of the racist capitalist Israeli state which rules Palestine from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea with a workers' state from the river to the sea, one the national character of which

would be Palestinian, but in which Israelis who will accept will enjoy equal civil rights. This goal can only be achieved by a working class socialist revolution fomented mostly by Arab workers, but supported by poor Palestinian peasants and those Israelis who back the Palestinians.

### Critical Support

Nevertheless, the adoption of the resolution at this time is an achievement for the struggle of the oppressed Palestinians and deserves our critical supports as it constitutes another step in the isolation of the Zionist apartheid state, another nail in its coffin.

It is more than likely that this resolution was adopted in reaction to Netanyahu's gross intervention in the US internal politics against Obama. The ancient Greek tragedian Euripides wrote that when the gods want to punish someone they first make him mad. The more disconnected from history the Israeli ruling class becomes the more stupid mistakes they will commit in addition to their crimes.

Following the adoption of this resolution, other major American unions may decide to support BDS. Toward this end, at this time it is necessary to demand from all trade unions in the US that they endorse the fight against Zionist oppression by demanding that the elected union bureaucracy institutes the *"hot cargo tactic"*: stopping the loading and unloading of Israeli goods from ships, trains, trucks and airplanes; actions focusing in particular on the import and export of Israeli products connected to the Zionist settlers in the West Bank and of the Israeli military industry. This is where such measures will hurt the Israeli ruling class the most.

### Israel's Military Industry

In 2013 a documentary called *The Lab*, an Israel journalist Yotam Feldman turned the spotlight on Israel's criminal arms industry. The film argues very forcefully that the four million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza have become guinea pigs in military experiments designed to enrich a new elite of arms dealers and former generals.

Following is an excerpt from an interview that was conducted with the film's producer:

Interviewer: *"You talk about two kinds of exports in this film. One of them is the arms exports, actual weapons. And the other is exporting training, of expertise, by Israeli former officers, who train other military forces, police, and so on. What is the Israeli specialization? What differentiates Israeli exports from exports from other countries?"*

Feldman: *"Yeah. I mean, first of all, although there are two kinds of expert in the film, actually there are more than that, 'cause on top of these, there is Homeland Security experts, which is not even counted in the national figures. I mean, the \$7 billion Israel gets from defense exports [annually] is not included — HLS is not included, [nor are...] fences and surveillance and many other measures which are also very successfully exported*

from Israel.

*I think the main product Israelis are selling, especially in the last decade, is experience. When customers – and I've seen it – from worldwide come to Israel or meet Israelis overseas, they're not especially interested in Israeli engineering or the Israeli products. But the testing of the products, the experience is the main thing they are coming to buy. They want the missile that was shot in the last operation in Gaza or the rifle that was used in the last West Bank incursion. This is what they're interested in.....*

*In Israel the connection is very close. I mean, many of the politicians who will decide when will the next operation is to begin are actually personally involved in this weapons trade industry and have personal or have people in their very close surroundings gaining from these operations.*

*I don't think my argument in the film is that it's all about money and economic interest and that's everything and, you know, the main reasons to go to operations in Gaza is greed or profit. It's not really that way. There is ideology, there are other factors, of course, which have, probably, a heavier influence. I do think it does play a part in the way the operations are managed in their length, in their duration, in the kinds of weapons which are used. There is a very strong influence, I think. And the other factor is that now the Israeli economy is so much dependent on these operations. It's 20 percent of the exports. It's 150,000 families – not people – in Israel actually dependent on this industry. And if one day it will stop, if there will be no next operation in Gaza, Israel will have some economic problems.....*

*The pillars of the Israeli defense industry are still nationalized. The three biggest weapons factories, Rafael, IAL, and IML, are state-owned. But still there is a very big and very flourishing private sector, private defense sector, which has, as you said, very close cooperation with the government, with the army. They pride themselves in the Israeli reserve system, which allows the same person who is developing the weapon and selling it to actually test it when he's doing reserve duty in the Israeli army.*

*The strongest connection is with the Israeli army. I mean, Elbit, which is the most profitable – it's not the largest, but it's the most profitable – defense company in Israel, is private, and is owned by Mickey Federmann, very close to Ehud Barak, the former defense minister, and recruits every year dozens of very high army officers to their company. And I think one of the main reasons they take them, besides their expertise and everything, is their current connections in the Israeli army and their ability to sell products to the army so they can later export them."*

### **New Minister of Public Security as an Arms Dealer?**

In light of this information it is not very surprising that, on 25 August 2015, the new Minister of Public Security Gilad Erdan (Likud) announced that Brigadier General (res.) Gal Hirsch, has become the new Police Commissioner. The nomination of a former army general rather than a police officer to this position is not surprising. The police have become notorious for corruption, sexual abuse and violence, not only against Palestinians but against Ethiopians as well. Yet there is more to this than meets the eye.

Hirsch is not only an army general (in the reserves) but is also an arms dealer, a very common occupation of former Israeli generals. In 2013, the FBI informed the Israeli Police that Hirsch is suspected of illegal weapons trafficking. The police did nothing. Apparently it was beneficial to the

chiefs of police to do nothing and just keep the information close to their chest for the right moment. The information only came to light after the police passed the information on to Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein at the end of last week. Weinstein is now set to examine the information, which relates to two separate deals which took place in Georgia and Kazakhstan, in 2008 and 2013.

Sources close to Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan say that he continues to support Hirsch's nomination, but if the materials passed by the Israeli Police to Attorney General Weinstein are as significant as they appear, he will ask former army commander Hirsch – Erdan's preferred candidate – to withdraw his nomination for the top police post.

Clearly Israel is corrupt to the core and cannot be otherwise. The systematic oppression and looting of the Palestinians has turned Israel into a corrupt apartheid state where life of most people, Palestinians and Jews alike, is cheap and the only thing that counts for the ruling class and the upper middle class is making money by any means possible. The main enemy of the common Israeli, like in any other capitalist state, is the ruling class. However the Israelis, because they are currently in their overwhelming majority a brainwashed part of the apartheid society (paying their taxes, serving in the army and reserves), cannot possibly understand this and are thus are condemned to live not only in a death trap but in ugly corrupted state they cannot oppose.

The only road open to any Israeli who does not want to be a prisoner of this ugly creature named Israel is to break with Zionism and join the Palestinians in the struggle for a *Free Red Palestine from the River to the Sea.*

### **Footnotes**

(1) Alan Hart: UE Becomes First National U.S. Union to Endorse BDS, Portside, August 28, 2015, <http://www.portside.org/2015-08-28/ue-becomes-first-national-us-union-endorse-bds#sthash.4AS5f9HL.dpuf>

(2) Yotam Feldman: New Film Exposes the Israeli Weapon and Security Industry, October 3, 2014, [http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumivai=10220](http://therealnews.com/t2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumivai=10220) ■



# Nuclear Agreement Signed: Will Iran Become the Policeman of Imperialism in the Region?

By Yossi Schwarz, *Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT Section in Israel / Occupied Palestine)*, 23.7.2015

In mid-July this year six imperialist powers, the US, Russia, China, France, England, and Germany, signed an agreement with Iran which will limit the latter's ability to produce enriched uranium to develop nuclear weapons. In return, sanctions which were imposed on Iran by the United States after the Islamist revolution of 1979 have been removed, sanctions which were [expanded](#) by the UN in 2006. These sanctions severely damaged Iran's economy and caused much [suffering](#) (including a doubling of the poverty rate) for the Iranian masses.

The Western imperialist powers hoped that the sanctions would lead the masses to rise up against the regime – in practice the sanctions only weakened the winds of revolt. [\[1\]](#) Thus the United States and her allies [failed](#) in their attempts to defeat both the regime and the people of Iran. This failure is yet another link in the chain of failures and embroilments garnered by the Imperialist Axis of Evil. Everywhere in the Middle East that imperialism has attempted to exploit to its advantage its superior military power, more harm than good has been done to its own interests (e.g., the [emergence](#) of the Islamic State Organization out of the ruins of Iraq and Syria and, specifically, from the American prisons in Iraq, notorious for their brutality).

The historic economic crisis which began in 2008 buried any possibility for yet another American military intervention, and this led to a tactical change by the US administration. But strategic goals remain unchanged. This is the reason that Iran is gradually being transformed from a bitter enemy to a partner in creating the order which the Americans want to see prevail in the Middle East. This does not mean that there won't be places where US imperialism and Iran will be on different sides of the barricade. The reason for this is that the US is not the only imperialist country in the region. Apparently, Iran will try to take advantage of the contradictions between the various imperialist powers struggling for control of the region in order to strengthen its own power and influence.

A similar slap in the face was received by various Israeli governments which for a decade exacerbated in an unprecedented fashion the abuse and suffering heaped upon the residents of the Gaza Strip, whether this be under siege and starvation or by means of wholesale massacres. This policy of Israel was implemented on the assumption that the residents of Gaza will exert pressure on the Hamas and perhaps will even try to topple the leadership in favor of more a "moderate" Fatah-style one. However, the masses of Gaza continue to see Israel as the murderous enemy and Hamas as representing their spirit of resistance. If any initiative to topple the Hamas regime in fact exists, it is from the side of the more radical Islamists organizations who consider Hamas a collaborator of Israel and America and the Hamas leaders as heretics.

We have no doubt that Hamas indeed is looking for any way possible to follow the path of Fatah and to turn

itself into a tool of Israel vis-à-vis the oppression of the Palestinian people. Hamas is ready for this in exchange for a piece of the action in the exploitation of the workers of Gaza like those on the backs of whom the Gulf States became rich. As these lines are being written, Hamas is struggling with all its might to maintain the calm and suppress any attempts of resistance from sons and daughters of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. Just like Fatah, Hamas is ready and eager at any moment to reach an agreement with Israel on the basis of 1967 borders. But as much as the capitalist class interests of the Hamas regime make it impossible for it to do more than simply sabotage the struggle of national liberation for all of Palestine, Israel has no right to overthrow this elected government of the Palestinian people, a bourgeois rule which can only be toppled by a revolutionary uprising of the workers and poor fellahin.

## Historical Background

Until the Islamist revolution in 1979, Iran was ruled by the Pahlavi dynasty which [came to power](#) in a military coup in 1921. The founder of the dynasty, Reza Shah Pahlavi, became a fervent supporter of Adolf Hitler. In August 1941, British and Soviet forces invaded Iran, overthrew the Shah and replaced him with his son Muhammad. After the war, Stalin tried to extend the area of Soviet influence in northern Iran by assisting the establishment of the Kurdish Republic under Qazi Muhammad.

But under British pressure the Soviet Union chose to leave Iran rather than organize revolutionary mass resistance. The Iranian army, with the assistance of neighbors and under the orchestration of British and American imperialism conquered Mahabad, the capital of the Kurdish Republic declared in 1946. The leaders of the Kurdish Republic were hanged in the city's central square in 1947. The repression of the Kurdish Republic and support for the Shah's monarchical regime once again exposed the reactionary nature of the United States and Britain – they talk endlessly about democracy but actually support dictatorship. In this way, a decade earlier, democratic Spain was also sacrificed to fascism, and volunteers who wanted to go and fight there for democracy were persecuted by the Western regimes.

## Western and Israeli Involvement in Iran

The Iranian elections of 1951 brought to power the National Front Party headed by Mohammad Mossadegh which nationalized the country's oil without threatening the monarchy and the rule of the Shah. Until July 1952, the Tudeh Party of Iran, a communist party, opposed Mossadegh and considered him an agent of American imperialism, but after July 1952 Tudeh supported Mossadegh. However as early as August, Tudeh began

attempts to undermine Mossadegh's rule without offering itself as an alternative.

As has happened many times throughout history, the National Front government which represented the interests of certain wings of the Iranian bourgeoisie was afraid of its own shadow (and of losing control of the masses) and did not foment a bourgeois democratic revolution. This in turn opened the path to its toppling in a military coup orchestrated by the American CIA and the British MI6 in August 1953, despite the protests of the Iranian masses.

From then and until its overthrow in 1979, the regime of the Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi became a policeman for the United States and Israel. Israel helped the Shah build a modern army to fulfill his role and Israel's Mossad assisted him in founding his notoriously cruel Security Service, the SAVAK. Therefore, when Israel boasts and brags about being "the only democracy in the Middle East" (a particularly boldfaced lie) it is worth remembering the role it played in liquidating the democratic aspirations of the region's peoples. Perhaps the greater irony is that on the eve of the Islamic Revolution, Israel and Iran were about to close a [deal](#) to jointly develop missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads (and even after the Revolution, Israel [continued](#) selling arms to Iran).

Before Khomeini came to power there [was](#) real potential for a successful socialist revolution in Iran. The Iranian Left enjoyed wide support and the masses, who wanted revolution, began organizing workers' councils (*shura*). But the great majority of the Iranian Left, which included the Communist Party and the radical leftist organization *Mujahideen Khalq*, under pressure from the Stalinist Soviet leadership, politically supported Khomeini and refused to foment a socialist revolution. After Khomeini's rise to power the Left and the supporters of the Shah were brutally suppressed.<sup>[2]</sup> For this reason Iran's Islamist revolution should be seen as a counter-revolution<sup>[3]</sup> as it aimed to eliminate any possibility of a socialist revolution and keep Iran a capitalist market state under an Islamic veil.

After Khomeini's rise to power, the United States pushed Iraq under by Saddam Hussein to wage a war against Iran. This war, which continued for eight years, led to the death of no fewer than one million people. Despite all this, and in the absence of an alternative the regime of the Ayatollahs held out and even strengthened its position.<sup>[4]</sup> With the failure of the attempt to defeat Iran by force, the effort of the imperialist West was shifted in favor of economic sanctions which brought about similar "achievements."

Therefore, when Western television screens, saturated with Zionist and American propaganda, broadcast videos clips in which the Iranian masses call for "Death to America! Death to Israel!" it should be remembered that there are good reasons for these calls but that [anti-Semitism](#) is *not* one of them. Despite the fact that Iran's political regime, the representative of the local tycoons, is crawling at an increasing pace towards a strategic alliance with Western imperialism, it really has no choice but to convey to the Iranian people "business as usual" with regard to expressions of hatred toward the United States and Israel.

## Will Iran Become the Policeman of the Middle East?

Iran, it turns out, in return for its renouncing its military nuclear program, will once again assume, like in the days before the Islamic Revolution, the role of the regional policeman. As these relations progressively deepen, the anti-imperialist rhetoric of the regime will increasingly soften. Meanwhile, in his last speech, the Supreme Leader Khamenei said that Iran will not abandon its friends the Palestinians, the Yemenis, the oppressed in Bahrain and the fighters in Lebanon, because the attitude towards the arrogant United States will not change. We encourage the masses struggling against oppression to carefully weigh the likelihood of such promises.

Israel is not only country opposed to this agreement. Saudi Arabia, for example, is trying to form an [anti-Iranian Sunni front](#) with Egypt and Turkey, but this front has no chance of replacing Iran. Israel is currently involved in an undeclared but pretty transparent alliance with Saudi Arabia against Iran, as has been revealed by recent events in Syria. Therefore, even when the website of Zionist Left party – Meretz – talks about "*deep common interests between Israel and the moderate elements in the Arab world,*" it's worth remembering which "*moderates*" they're talking about, what exactly is the attitude of these "*moderates*" to democracy; equally importantly what all this says about Meretz.

Netanyahu shouts justifiably, for him, that the agreement signed with Iran is not a good agreement – and it is indeed very bad for Israel. But the truth is that *no* agreement would be good enough for Israel and the only alternative for the Zionist government is to drag the United States into a war against Iran. Netanyahu apparently needs to be reminded that the reason Western imperialism is looking for an additional policeman, and is possibly even considering getting an entirely different policeman is, in addition to the world economic crisis, the weak, undermined position of its current policeman. Israel has proved incapable of subduing the resistance organizations and the rebellion of the Arab masses who take inspiration from the example (and it doesn't matter at all how many betrayals and how much oppression Israel manages to foment among the Arab masses). Furthermore, the Zionist criminal hooligan behavior only further destabilizes the region.

We, of course, are not the only ones who claim that the source of Israel's fear is much deeper than Iran's nuclear program should warrant and is in fact the concern that a new local bully is about to enter the scene. [Similar claims](#) are raised even from within the conservative, pro-Israeli American camp.

In our opinion, revolutionary socialists should support the lifting of imperialist sanctions from Iran. But unlike most left-wing organizations in our neighborhood we openly say that in a situation in which both the US and Israel have nuclear weapons Iran also has the right to possess such weapons. In the same breath, we propose maintaining vigilance regarding the possibility of Iran's becoming imperialism's policeman in the region. As these lines are being written, the US and Iran are already cooperating to suppress the Sunni insurrection in Iraq which gave rise to, among other things, the Islamic State organization. While Assad's supporters among the Palestinian Left throw in our faces that the Islamic State in Syria is being supported

by the US (and naturally various proponents of conspiracy theories argue that its leaders were even trained by the Israeli Mossad), they have difficulty explaining exactly why the Islamic State is being bombed by the US in Iraq.

It's difficult not to see that the imperialist order, which with a ruler and bloodshed the West created in the Middle East after World War I, is crumbling. But an American-Iranian alliance will not create a new order that will bring economic, social, and personal security to the masses. A new order will arise only out of a revolutionary struggle by the exploited and oppressed masses. This struggle demands forming an alliance between the working class and the poor peasants and urban poor, an alliance that will be led by the revolutionary sector of the working class.

The masses have already begun this battle, which has known and will yet know ups and downs, by raising democratic slogans. However, the role of revolutionary socialists is to persuade by word and deed that at this stage of history only a socialist revolution will realize all the democratic demands, and that any leadership which is

not revolutionary-socialist will prefer a dictatorship that serves the interests of the tycoons and capitalists over a democracy that will imperil their own political power. In stark contrast to this, the socialist revolution in our region will replace the phony nation states, which were imposed by Western imperialism, by a Socialist Federation of the Peoples of the Middle East and the rule of tycoons and bourgeois capitalists with the democratic rule of workers' and peasant councils.

Notes:

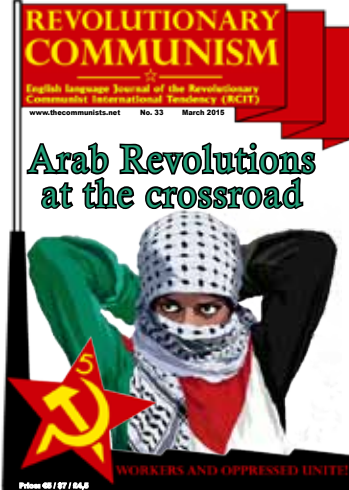
[1] The Canadian government openly expressed the desire that the sanctions would encourage the "democratic" forces in Iran to topple the regime: <http://goo.gl/Om5Mtx>

[2] However, it should be noted that only a handful of the old military elite was imprisoned and even they were released shortly after to lead the war effort.

[3] Menachem Begin himself said "Khomeini is Kerensky"

[4] This despite the fact that the Iranian army stood by idly at the beginning of the war – because it wanted to rehabilitate itself so that it could suppress the workers and the Kurds when the war ended – while the independent Iranian militias fought valiantly. ■

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# Turkey: Stop the Aggression against the Kurds!

## No to the US/France/UK Crusade against the People of Iraq and Syria!

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 29 July 2015*

1. In the last few days we have witnessed a major escalation of the conflict between the bourgeois, pro-imperialist Erdogan government of Turkey and the Kurds in North-Kurdistan (Southeast Turkey). The events began with a horrific suicide bombing in Suruç carried out by Daesh/IS against a rally of SGDF (*Federation of Socialist Youth Associations*), young Turkish socialist activists, who came to the district of Suruç in eastern Turkey from Istanbul with the intention of participating in the rebuilding of Kobanê just across the border in northern Syria. In the brutal bombing, 32 young activists were killed.

2. Following this barbarous act, an uprising broke out in the Kurdish areas of Turkey, many Kurds accusing the bourgeois Turkish government of secretly supporting Daesh/IS against their Kurdish brethren. It is understandable that Kurdish workers can believe such conspiracy theories inasmuch as the Erdogan government is directing much of its military force to suppress the just liberation struggle of the Kurdish people. However, it is absolutely *not* true that Daesh/IS is the instrument of Turkey (nor of any other state). Regardless, Ankara is evidently exploiting the pretext of the “war on terror” to crack down primarily on the petty-bourgeois nationalist Kurdish PKK and not Daesh/IS. Towards this end the Turkish army has used some isolated armed attacks of the PKK against Turkish police as an excuse to reopen its assault on Kurdish resistance camps in northern Iraq. It appears that, until now, the Turkish military has directed its attacks mostly against PKK forces in northern Iraq and not against the YPG (People’s Defense Units), the armed wing of the Kurdish PYD (Democratic Union Party) in Rojava, the Kurdish region of Syria.

3. The RCIT calls upon all revolutionaries to stand unequivocally on the side of the Kurdish people and to defend them against discrimination and oppression. Likewise we call for the defense of the HDP against the fascist MHP’s threats to outlaw it. While we reject the left-wing nationalism of the official petty-bourgeois leadership of the Kurdish masses, we stand shoulder to shoulder with them when they fight for progressive goals. It is especially important that the workers’ movement in Turkey makes efforts to break the mass-influence of Erdogan’s bourgeois AKP (Justice and Development Party). However, it is impossible to do so by simply denouncing the government in Turkey as a “fascist,” as many Stalinists and other leftists do. We completely reject the Maoist-inspired guerilla strategy of the PKK and acts of terrorism by individuals against Turkish police and army forces. In particular we warn the Kurdish workers to be wary of the pro-imperialist leadership of the PYD in Syria as well as that of the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) and the PUK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) in Iraq who are closely working together with the US and EU. To a limited extent the Kurdish forces have received weapons from the Western imperialists as well as military training

and air support. However, the liberation of the Kurdish people and the establishment of a free, red Kurdistan can *only* be achieved by a consistent revolutionary workers’ party. Building such a party is the most important task today in Turkey and Kurdistan.

4. While the Erdogan regime continues it stepped up attacks on the Kurds, in parallel it is moving closer to the imperialist “*Alliance*” against Daesh/IS. The *Alliance* fighting Daesh/IS is composed of mostly arch-reactionary imperialist or pro-imperialist forces, like the great powers of the US, Britain and France as well as their lackeys in the region (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan and Morocco, all of them brutal dictatorships, and the Iraqi Haider al-Abadi regime which is serving both Washington and Teheran). In addition, this unholy alliance includes countries and forces closely aligned to Russian and Chinese imperialism (Iran, the Assad regime in Syrian and Hezbollah).

5. It is the position of the RCIT that the *only* justified defense struggles against the arch-reactionary thugs of Daesh/IS are those of the Syrian rebels who are simultaneously fighting against *both* Assad’s army *and* Daesh/IS on the one hand and the Kurdish forces both in Syria (Rojava) and Iraq in addition to other national minorities on the other. While we support these justified struggles against Daesh/IS, at the same time we call for the defeat of the intervening imperialist *Alliance*. We note that the butcher Assad is responsible for far more killing of civilians and far more torture than IS, and it now seems – especially following the nuclear deal – that the US and Iran are moving closer together.

6. Revolutionaries in Iraq and Syria must fight *both* the reactionary imperialist intervention *and* Daesh/IS. Regardless of our enmity to Daesh/IS, in the fight against this brutal, murderous, arch-reactionary organization we condemn all bombings carried out by the warplanes and drones of imperialism. All imperialist must be kicked out of the Middle East! In Syria the revolution against Assad must continue and be transformed into a fight for power of the workers and the peasants. Only when our class is in power can the war be ended and Syria rebuilt in the interest of the masses!

*\* Down with the imperialist crusade!*

*\* For a Federation of Workers’ and Fellahin Republics in the Middle East! ■*

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By Michael Pröbsting, March 2014



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By Michael Pröbsting, August 2014



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#### V. Summary



## Brazil: All workers and oppressed to the streets on 20 August!

### Fight against both the attacks of President Roussef on our rights and against the threat of a fascist coup!

*Statement of the Corrente Comunista Revolucionária-CCR (Section of RCIT in Brazil)*

**D**uring the PT's electoral program on the evening of 6 August, as had been expected and was even encouraged by conservative media, reactionary sections of the middle class across the country once again made a banging pots protest, simultaneously condemning both President Dilma and the Workers' Party. (However, this time, the same did not happen again in the peripheral areas of the country and in its cities' poor neighborhoods.) Part of the reasons for the protest of the middle and lower-middle classes is the harsh economic measures being adopted by Dilma's government, led by its Finance Minister Joaquim Levy, which have led to wage reductions, rising interest rates, rising unemployment, accelerating inflation (now almost at an annual rate of 10%), and cutbacks in social security and unemployment insurance. So it is understandable that support for the government is undergoing massive attrition throughout the country's population, even among those who voted for Dilma's party in the last elections.

Since the end of military rule in 1985, this kind of crisis has been experienced by earlier governments. For example, President Collor was impeached not only because of the rife corruption he was involved in, but because the majority of the working population simply lost their patience with the president who didn't have a particularly

strong party base. Following Color's impeachment the PMDB gained the presidency in the person of Itamar Franco. This in turn paved the way for the rise to power of the reactionary conservative PSDB with Fernando Henrique Cardoso at its head. Cardoso's government began implementing extensive privatizations of national resources, like that of Vale do Rio Doce, one of the largest mining companies in the world. In addition, the Cardoso government aggressively attacked the working class, for example when it stationed forces of the Brazilian army at the plants of Petrobras during the 1995 worker's strike called following layoffs there and the government's plan to privatize the oil giant. At the time the strike did prevent the privatization of the company, however, corruption scandals continued apace, including suspicions of vote-buying, making possible Cardoso's re-election to the presidency.

In the present crisis, we do not support the impeachment of Dilma, nor do we call for new elections as the right-wing PSDB has done. Similarly, we do not support the position of the PSTU which states that "it is not in favor of Dilma's exit at the hands of corrupt Congress," instead calling the social movement to break with the PT's policy to seek an alternative government. Yet, despite their alleged position, the PSTU is equivocating when it says



*Mass demonstration of the trade union federation CUT in Sao Paulo*

“What our Party proposes is that the workers organize and fight to overthrow the Dilma government.” To this call we reply: Where does the PSTU see a massive presence of workers and mass organizations on the streets in favor of overthrowing the government of the Popular Front? Is it sufficient for these Morenoists to simply see *any* crowd in the streets for them to declare that we are on the verge of Socialist Revolution? On the contrary, what we are witnessing today is an uprising of the middle class in the service of the ruling class, fomenting a conservative, anti-communist movement characterized by deep reactionary racist tendencies (against people who have migrated from the poor areas of the Northeast), xenophobia (against Haitian immigrants, Chileans, and Bolivians). These reactionary sectors of the population, supported by the conservative and *golpist* media, are even feeling secure and confident enough to commit acts of terror like the bombing of the offices of the “Lula Institute” in São Paulo on July 30 and the Postal Union on 16 March. In parliament there is currently being discussed legislation which would reduce the age at which teenagers can legally be imprisoned and yet another law which would allow outsourcing by contract of the entire working class of the country.

Therefore, it is absurd to maintain, as the PSTU does, that we are currently living through a revolutionary upsurge of the masses. Even worse, in its delirium, at the very same time it expresses such delusional positions, the PSTU is aligning itself with the most reactionary sectors to have returned to the political scene since the end of military dictatorship. If the Dilma government should indeed fall, who exactly do they think will take power? Does the PSTU really believe that we are in a revolutionary process and that, supposedly, the party itself will be in the front line of the revolutionary struggle (also absurd!), or is the PSTU’s current surge in adrenalin-induced boasting nothing more than pure opportunism with which it hopes to gain the sympathy of radicalized petty-bourgeois middle-class sectors “against corruption.”

What we are currently witnessing in no way resembles a revolutionary process. Regardless of the arrest of construction tycoons (Odebrecht, Camargo Correa, and Andrade Gutierrez) the primary targets of the ongoing uprising are the leftist militants and former ministers of the PT. The recent arrest of former PT minister José Dirceu is intended not only to further demoralize Dilma Rousseff, but to cripple any future candidacy of Lula for president in 2018. The reactionary right-wing sectors see in PT a “communism” which never even came close to being the case. But what is really at stake for those directing the reactionary mobs on the streets is not the fight against corruption or even the supposed communism of the PT governments. If such pretensions were in fact the case, people like Congressman Paulo Maluf would already be behind bars. Governor Geraldo Alckmin and the PSDB in the State of São Paulo are insufficient in themselves to explain the misappropriation of millions of dollars allocated to the expansion of the subway lines. Much more than corruption, what is at stake for the forces of reaction in Brazil who are doing their utmost to topple the government of Dilma Rousset is their desire to placate the pressure being exerted by imperialism and Brazil’s own national bourgeoisie: to bring about full privatization of the pre-salt; to privatize the Bank of Brazil and the state

bank “Caixa Economica Federal”; to fully implement the outsourcing of work by contract; to severely limit or even entirely eliminate vacation rights for workers, their Christmas bonus, their maternity leave, etc. Such wide-sweeping, brutal attacks against the workers of Brazil is much more than the PT governments could ever possibly accomplish without entirely losing their social support base among the working masses. It is precisely these last arch-reactionary goals which are what lays behind the current coup movement.

If the coup-d’état does in fact take place and Dilma Rousseff’s is ousted, all workers’ groups and leftist movements (even those who are merely considered leftist), all social movements, neighborhood organizations, progressive political parties, strike movements, trade unions – all will feel on their own flesh the advance of semi-fascist repression.

However, we must state our position very clearly: We do *not* support the Popular Front government of PT/PMDB. Not only must we fight against the coup movement, but also against the harsh measures taken by President Dilma Rousseff against the workers of this country: the intense pursuit of surplus value; rising interest rates; wage reductions in the civil service (pensioned public workers are now on strike); the very fact that one of the “Chicago Boys,” Joaquim Levy as Ministry of Finance; Katia Abreu’s, representative of major landowners, tenure as the Minister of Agriculture; the encroachment on the right of workers to pensions and unemployment insurance. The Workers’ Party must break with the Popular Front and get back to working class and the poor. The federal Trade Unions, especially the CUT, should become independent of the government and demand the end of these attacks against the workers of Brazil.

Above all, it is urgent that the working class and oppressed organize without delay to meet head-on any threat of coup. The coup, if it occurs, will not be rescinded by parliamentary agreements or legal maneuvers. It is only the working people, the youth of the cities, suburbs and hinterlands across the country that undertake this fight. We need to organize ourselves in the workplaces, in the neighborhoods, in the favelas and form popular committees which will struggle against the looming coup.

- No to impeachment! No to the call for new elections!

- All working people and oppressed to the streets on August 20 to protest against the governmental attacks of Dilma Rousseff and at the same time against the threat of a fascist coup!

- For the creation of committees of struggle in the factories, the neighborhoods, the favelas, in the peripheries, and in the trade unions in urgent defense of our rights and against any coup movement!

<http://www.cartacapital.com.br/blogs/parlatorio/instituto-lula-e-alvo-de-ataque-a-bomba-assista-1529.html>  
<http://www.thecomunists.net/home/portugu%C3%AAs/manifestacoes-golpistas/>  
<http://www.thecomunists.net/home/portugu%C3%AAs/may-day-statement-2015/>

View pictures of the demonstration and the CCR comrades at [www.elmundosocialista.blogspot.com/2015/09/presenca-da-ccr-secao-no-brasil-do-rcit.html](http://www.elmundosocialista.blogspot.com/2015/09/presenca-da-ccr-secao-no-brasil-do-rcit.html) ■

# ONLY THE REVOLUTION WILL LIBERATE US!

## Platform of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency

### (CCR, Section of the RCIT/CCRI in Brazil)

1. Defend democratic rights – no to golpism! To defeat the golpists in the streets, mobilize the working class and the popular masses independent of the popular front!

2. Stop the attacks on the rights of the working people! PT: break with the capitalists and imperialists; stop the attacks on your own rank and file! For a militant workers' struggle against the attacks. For the formation of action committees in the workplaces, neighborhoods, schools and villages to organize the struggle!

3. No to imperialism! Nationalize foreign companies under the control of the workers; nationalize the banks and fuse them into a single central bank under workers' control. Against the imperialism of the US and the EU as well as against the imperialism of China and Russia! End Brazilian participation of the imperialist intervention in Haiti!

4. No to racism and police violence! Full equality for black Brazilians and indigenous people, including equal wages for equal jobs! For the establishment of self-defense committees of workers and oppressed against police violence and the attacks of racists!

5. Nationalize all the lands owned by foreign companies as well as those of the big landowners! Land to the landless and the poor peasants!

6. Jobs and housing for the poor of the *favelas*! Appropriate houses of the rich and unoccupied houses and give them to the homeless and poor! For a public employment program to build adequate homes for everybody as well as schools, hospitals, care homes and similar institutions also to reduce unemployment! Such a program should be financed by the taxation of the rich and by the expropriation of the superrich!

7. For women's liberation; stop the violence against women! Build free nurseries for all children, thereby also reducing unemployment. For a revolutionary movement of working and poor women!

Against the discrimination of the youth and homosexuals! Defend the rights of the elderly and the disabled! Equal rights for all religions (especially for the African religions); we respect all religious beliefs and say no to religious intolerance! For the separation of Church and State!

8. Stop capitalism's destruction of the environment! Replace existing environmentally- harmful sources of energy with renewable and clean energies under control of the working class and trade unions!

9. Solidarity with the worldwide struggle of the oppressed! Defend blacks and Latinos against the racist police violence in the US! Solidarity with the struggle of workers and poor throughout Latin America! Victory to the Arab Revolution! Support the fight against the oppressive, pro-imperialist military-dictatorship in Egypt! Victory to the revolution in Syria both against Assad! And smash IS/Daesh! Stop imperialist attacks and occupations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Central Africa or Chechnya. Down with the Apartheid state of Israel! For a free, red Palestine!

10. Defend Venezuela against imperialism, but no political support for the state capitalist Bolivarian government! Stop the restoration of capitalism in Cuba! Solidarity with the struggle against austerity in Greece and everywhere in Europe!

11. Nationalize all banks and corporations under workers' control! For a Brazil in which the workers, peasants and poor wield the power! For a workers' government based on mass action committees and self-defense committees to overthrow capitalism and break with imperialism! Therefore, we need a socialist revolution! For the formation of a federation of red workers' and peasant republics in Latin America!

12. The CCR is dedicated to building an authentic revolutionary organization to struggle for the rights of the workers and poor! Support the formation of the CCRI/RCIT as a revolutionary international organization! For a revolutionary 5<sup>th</sup> international of the world working class (world party of socialist revolution)! ■



CCR Activists at a mass demonstration in Sao Paulo

# 75 Years after the Murder of Trotsky: Fight for Revolutionary Leadership!

By Johannes Wiener, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 20 August 2015

75 years ago Leon Trotsky, one of the most important leaders of the revolutionary workers' movement, was murdered by a Stalinist agent in Coyoacán, Mexico. We don't want to simply rewrite his biographical data but focus on what his life and struggle means to us, revolutionary workers, today.

## A Revolutionary Life

Leon Trotsky was not just a very important theoretician for Marxism (he elaborated the Marxist theory on the question of the Permanent Revolution, the tactics and strategy in relation to a degenerated workers' state and many other key and vital subjects), he was also a brave revolutionary leader in practice. He is the personification of the Marxist principle that theory and practice must go hand-in-hand and complement one other. In 1896, when he was just 18 years old and first became a Marxist, he organized workers and participated in revolutionary underground work. He was imprisoned twice by the tsarist regime as well as once by the Kerensky government, and was ultimately exiled by the Stalinist traitors. Leon Trotsky served as the head of the Soviet of Petrograd during the Revolution of 1905 and during the October Revolution in 1917. In contrast to Stalin, Trotsky played a central role during the Bolshevik Revolution and the civil war. He organized the very successful red uprising in Petrograd in 1917 and was the founder and first leader of the Red Army. He was also an important figure in the Communist International (Comintern), founded in March 1919, and drafted the manifestos of its first four congresses.

## The Revolutionary Struggle against Stalinism

When the bureaucracy of the Soviet Union, headed by Stalin, rose to power after the death of Lenin in January 1924, Trotsky was one of the first to oppose the counter-revolutionary degeneration which characterized the transition to the brutal Stalinist regime. The Stalinist bureaucracy exiled him and imprisoned many other consistent revolutionaries and long-time Bolshevik leaders because they were not able to defeat Trotsky and the other steadfast Bolshevik leaders with political arguments and the latter represented a real alternative to the Stalinist bureaucratic rule. Trotsky was deported by the Stalinists from the Soviet Union in early 1929, the workers' state which he had founded together with Lenin.

## The Fourth International

In exile Trotsky built up the *International Left Opposition* which tried to reform the Stalinist Comintern. However, after the defeat in Germany in 1933 (when the fascists took power in the country which had the strongest Communist Party outside the Soviet Union) he fought for the build-

ing of a new revolutionary international. The movement for the foundation of the Fourth International developed a new revolutionary program and, despite the Stalinist terror, the fascists, and the bourgeois "democrats," this movement was able to create combat organizations in the most important countries. The Fourth International was, despite its relatively small size, such a significant threat to Stalinism that the latter was forced to use slander, violence, and open terror to combat it. Thousands of Trotskyist fighters were killed in the Gulags (the labor camps of the Soviet Union) and many in other countries were murdered or disappeared at the hands of Stalinist agents.

The cowardly execution of Leon Trotsky from behind while he was unarmed perfectly epitomizes the wicked degeneration of Stalinism. The Stalinists were unable to fight the *International Left Opposition* out in the open on a political level before the eyes of the oppressed and within the workers' movement for the best ideas and revolutionary line, so they had to resort to the murder and slandering of the consistent revolutionary fighters, and to the falsification of their true positions.

## What Can We Learn for Today?

Today we live in a situation which is somewhat comparable to both the first years of the *International Left Opposition* and the years of the *First International* of Marx and Engels. On the one hand, we stand on the shoulders of nearly 170 years of organized struggle for the socialist revolution. On the other hand, today's authentic revolutionary forces are weaker than ever before. We need to undertake serious revolutionary work and bring revolutionary ideas to where they are needed: to the working class and oppressed masses. Trotsky was always oriented to the needs of the workers and oppressed, despite his own personal origins with which he broke. He was very critical of both intellectuals and petty bourgeois fair-weather revolutionaries. For him and the *Fourth International*, it was always vitally important not just *what you say*, but also *what you do*. It is told how once, during the Spanish civil war, Trotsky held a discussion with a leader of a Spanish left-wing organization. The leader of this organization talked at length about what needs to be done. Then Trotsky asked him: "How many comrades does your organization have in the battle?" The petty bourgeois leader answered in shock: "Fortunately no one!" Trotsky told him: "See, that is the problem!" We, today's revolutionaries, also have to develop such an attitude. For the masses, not just fancy words are important but rather what you actually do, how you intervene in the class struggle, and whether you are able to lead and produce victories.

Trotsky was a consistent internationalist as he demonstrated during the First World War, when he opposed all imperialist camps. He always defended the rights of oppressed peoples and fought for their right to self-de-

termination. He also developed the slogan for the United Socialist States of Europe which was adopted by the revolutionary Comintern in 1923. For him it was equally important to build an organization in his own country and fight there for socialist revolution *and* to simultaneously build a revolutionary organization internationally. Trotsky was the personification of the nationless revolutionary fighter who is hounded from one country to the other.

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) proudly follows in Trotsky's path. Our work is dedicated to the formation of a strong revolutionary international organization which is able to develop revolutionary theory, as well as to intervene in struggles of the masses and to serve the oppressed.

There is no hope for us under capitalism. This system incessantly and increasingly wrecks our living conditions, our environment, and our entire future. There is just one way forward for the workers and oppressed masses of our planet, and this is the revolutionary liberation struggle. Only a worldwide revolution which overthrows the rule of the rich and the bosses will be able to create a future worth living. There is no more beautiful meaning to life than to fight not just for yourself, but to dedicate your life, your power, and your mind to fight for all oppressed people. This dedication and devotion is the essence of the character of a revolutionary. Trotsky lived by these principles and died for them. We too have to live by them if we want to win the struggle and if we want to deserve to win it. We see that most leftists, especially in the rich countries, do not live by these principles but are continually corrupted by the small "pleasures" capitalism provides them. Real revolutionaries like Trotsky despise this.

Dedication to building the revolutionary organization

and serving the oppressed goes hand-in-hand with flexible tactics. Flexible steel is the hardest to break and the same is applicable for any revolutionary organization worthy of the title. To dispel the existing illusions of the masses it is not sufficient to tell them the truth. They also need to learn from their own experience with and betrayals by their current non-revolutionary leaderships. Consistent revolutionaries assist the masses in breaking with such non-revolutionary leaderships, but without posing ultimatums.

Trotsky dedicated his life and all his energy to one goal: to liberate our class and all oppressed peoples from the rule of the exploiters. We have to learn from his dedication: he was not afraid of losing his livelihood, he was not afraid of going to prison, he didn't break because of the pressure of the Stalinists, and he was – in the final analysis – not afraid to die for his beliefs. Trotsky is a martyr in the revolutionary struggle for liberation and stands out among a long array of revolutionary fighters who were killed by oppressors from Spartacus, to Thomas Münzer, Toussaint Louverture, Wolf Tone, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, Mustafa Suphi, Tạ Thu Thâu, Che Guevara and thousands and thousands of others.

*We too are ready to sacrifice our best fighters if it is necessary in this struggle for the liberation of humanity. Capitalism can't kill all of us! They were able to kill Trotsky, but they will never be able to kill his immortal ideas – ideas which will lead us to our liberation! They can kill a revolutionary, but they can't kill the revolution!*

*Fight with the RCIT to build a strong genuine Trotskyist International Organization! ■*



*Lenin and Trotsky with soldiers of the Red Army in 1921*

# Books from the RCIT

## Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

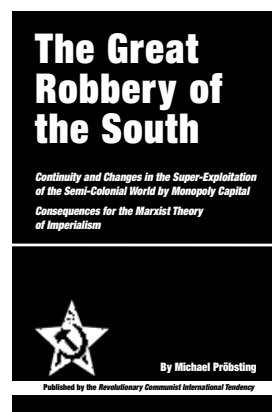
The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *THE GREAT ROBBERY OF THE SOUTH*. The book's subtitle is: *Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital*. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism. The book is in English-language. It has 15 chapters, 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who is the International Secretary of the RCIT.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the "Third World") by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He shows that the relationship between the small minority of rich capitalist countries and the huge majority of mankind living in the semi-colonial world forms one of the most important elements of the imperialist world system we are living in. The Great Robbery of the South shows that the past decades have been a complete confirmation of the validity of Lenin's theory of imperialism and its programmatic conclusions. *The Great Robbery of the South* demonstrates the important changes in the relationship between the imperialist and the semi-colonial countries. Using comprehensive material (including 139 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that never before has

such a big share of the world capitalist value been produced in the South. Never before have the imperialist monopolies been so dependent on the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. Never before has migrant labor from the semi-colonial world played such a significant role for the capitalist value production in the imperialist countries. Never before has the huge majority of the world working class lived in the South – outside of the old imperialist metropolises.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting argues that a correct understanding of the nature of imperialism as well as of the program of permanent revolution which includes the tactics of consistent anti-imperialism is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future.

Order your copy NOW! \$20 / £13 / €15 plus p+p (21\$ for US and international, £9 for UK, €10 for Europe) ■



Look for details of the books at [www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net](http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net) and [www.cuba-sold-out.net](http://www.cuba-sold-out.net)

## Michael Pröbsting: Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?*. The book's subtitle is: *The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism*. The book is in English-language. It has 5 chapters plus an appendix, 108 pages and includes 19 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who is the International Secretary of the RCIT.

In *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* Michael Pröbsting analyses the character of the Cuban Revolution 1959-61, its bureaucratic degeneration, and the recent march of the Castro leadership towards capitalism.

The author demonstrates how the Cuban Revolution, despite the initial modest intentions of its leaders, was spurred forward to more radical policies by grass roots struggles of Cuban workers and peasants. In fact, the very abolishment of capitalism by the Cuban regime was no part of the original game plan of either Castro's Movimiento 26 de Julio or of the official Cuban communist party (PSP), but rather was a product of precisely such pressures from below.

*Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* describes in detail how a number of relatively recent political, economic, and social measures were

purposely taken by the Cuban government to open the road back to capitalism. Pröbsting elaborates the key role of the world's new great imperialist power, China, in Cuba's state policy as exemplified in the June 2011 Sino-Cuban agreement for a first Five-Year Plan of cooperation between these two states.

*Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* examines these developments from the viewpoint of Marxist theory, the nature of the ruling bureaucracy in Stalinist states, and the process of restoration of capitalism under such regimes.

In conclusion, the book proposes a socialist program for political and social revolution in Cuba to halt the advance of capitalism and to eradicate the country's bureaucratic dictatorship.

Price: 8 Euro / 12 US-Dollars / 7 British Pound (plus delivery charges) ■



The Author: Michael Pröbsting is a revolutionary activist since 34 years. He is the author of many articles and pamphlets in German and English language. He published books or contributed to books on Rosa Luxemburg (1999), on the World Economy (2008), on Migration (2010) and the Arab Revolution (2011). In addition to *The Great Robbery of the South* and *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* he also published in 2014 the book *Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice. Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. He is the International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency.

# What the RCIT Stands for

**T**he *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) is a revolutionary combat organisation fighting for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. It has national sections in a number of countries. The working class is composed of all those (and their families) who are forced to sell their labor power as wage earners to the capitalists. The RCIT stands on the theory and practice of the revolutionary workers' movement associated with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky.

Capitalism endangers our lives and the future of humanity. Unemployment, war, environmental disasters, hunger, and exploitation are all part of everyday life under capitalism as are the imperialistic oppression of nations, the national oppression of migrants, and the oppression of women, young people, and homosexuals. Therefore, we want to eliminate capitalism.

The liberation of the working class and all oppressed is possible only in a classless society without exploitation and oppression. Such a society can only be established internationally.

Therefore, the RCIT is fighting for a socialist revolution at home and around the world.

This revolution must be carried out and led by the working class, for only this class has the collective power to bring down the ruling class and build a socialist society.

The revolution cannot proceed peacefully because a ruling class never has nor ever will voluntarily surrender its power. By necessity, therefore, the road to liberation includes armed rebellion and civil war against the capitalists.

The RCIT is fighting for the establishment of workers' and peasants' republics, where the oppressed organize themselves in councils democratically elected in rank-and-file meetings in factories, neighbourhoods, and schools. These councils, in turn, elect and control the government and all other state authorities, and always retain the right to recall them.

Authentic socialism and communism have nothing to do with the so-called "socialism" that ruled in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and which continues to do so in China and Cuba, for example. In these countries, the proletariat was and is dominated and oppressed by a privileged party bureaucracy.

Under capitalism, the RCIT supports all efforts to improve the living conditions of the workers and oppressed, while simultaneously striving to overthrow this system based on economic exploitation of the masses.

Towards these ends, we work from within the trade unions where we advocate class struggle, socialism, and workers' democracy. But trade unions and social democracy are controlled by a bureaucracy perniciously connected with the state and capital via status, high-paying jobs, and other privileges. Thus, the trade union bureaucracy is far from the interests and living conditions of

its members, based as it is on the top, privileged layers of the working class – a labor aristocracy which has no real interest in replacing capitalism. Therefore, the true struggle for the liberation of the working class, the toppling of capitalism and the establishment of socialism, must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their "representative" from the upper trade union strata.

We also fight for the expropriation of the big land owners as well as for the nationalisation of the land and its distribution to the poor and landless peasants. Towards this goal we struggle for the independent organisation of the rural workers.

We support national liberation movements against oppression. We also support the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed peoples against the great powers. Within these movements we advocate a revolutionary leadership as an alternative to nationalist or reformist forces.

While the RCIT strives for unity of action with other organizations, we are acutely aware that the policies of social democrats and pseudo-revolutionary groups are dangerous, and ultimately represent an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class, peasants, and the otherwise oppressed.

In wars between imperialist states we take a revolutionary defeatist position: we do not support either side, but rather advocate the transformation of the war into a civil war against the ruling class in each of the warring states. In wars between imperialist powers (or their stooges) and a semi-colonial countries we stand for the defeat of the former and the victory of the oppressed countries.

As communists, we maintain that the struggle against national oppression and all types of social oppression (women, youth, sexual minorities etc.) *must* be led by the working class, because only the latter is capable of fomenting a revolutionary change in society. Therefore, we consistently support working class-based revolutionary movements of the socially oppressed, while opposing the leadership of petty-bourgeois forces (feminism, nationalism, Islamism, etc.), who ultimately dance to the tune of the capitalists, and strive to replace them with revolutionary communist leadership.

Only with a revolutionary party fighting as its leadership can the working class be victorious in its struggle for liberation. The establishment of such a party and the execution of a successful revolution, as it was demonstrated by the Bolsheviks in Russia under Lenin and Trotsky remain the models for revolutionary parties and revolutions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

For new, revolutionary workers' parties in all countries!  
For a 5<sup>th</sup> Workers International to be founded on a revolutionary program! Join the RCIT!

*No future without socialism!*

*No socialism without revolution!*

*No revolution without a revolutionary party!*

